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351 die as airliners crash in mid-air

India orders inquiry into why departing and arriving jets met

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI AND HARVEY ELLIOTT

AT LEAST 351 people, including one Briton, are believed dead after a mid-air collision between a Saudi Airways Boeing 747 and a Russian-built Ilyushin-76 of Kazakh Airways near Delhi last night.

The Indian Government immediately ordered a judicial inquiry to determine if there was pilot error or whether air traffic controllers were to blame.

Witnesses on the ground described seeing a fireball falling out of the sky at dusk. Debris fell over flat farmland 40 miles southwest of the capital, a thinly populated area dotted with villages. Telephone communications are poor and access to the crash site is along farm tracks, hampering efforts by emergency services to reach the area. By early today 274 charred bodies had been recovered from the site.

Rao Singh, a building contractor who witnessed the crash from his home, said: "I saw a fireball and big black smoke falling into the fields."

The commander of a US Air Force transport plane that was flying near the mid-air collision said he saw a cloud glow bright orange and two fireballs plunge to the ground. Delhi airport officials said the Saudi plane, whose final destination was Jeddah, had 312 passengers and crew

aboard, many of them Indian labourers on their way to Saudi Arabia. It took off from Delhi at about 6.13pm local time as the Kazakh Airways Ilyushin-76, on an unscheduled flight, was coming in to land. The collision happened seven minutes after the Saudi aircraft left the ground.

India's Air Traffic Controllers' Guild, the controllers' trade union, said last night the disaster could have been averted if there had been separate arrival and departure routes at Delhi airport. Aircraft departing or arriving have to follow the same narrow corridor. It said controllers at Delhi had been making requests for separate routes for a long time.

The guild said both aircraft had been under radar control at the time of the accident and had been advised about each other's presence. The possible cause was equipment failure. "The Kazakh aircraft could have been at a lower height than had been assigned to it," the guild said.

H.S. Khola, Director General of Civil Aviation, said Delhi control tower had cleared the Saudi flight at 14,000 ft and the Russian-built aircraft had been cleared to descend to 15,000 ft. This distance was "normal practice". Aviation sources said the disaster could have been the

result of a misunderstanding between air traffic controllers and the Kazakh Airways pilot. Previous problems had been caused by the poor command of English by pilots from Central Asian countries.

Indian airports do not have an impressive safety record and there has been criticism by pilots of standards at Delhi, although these have been improved significantly in recent years.

There was speculation last night that the Kazakh pilot may have cut corners to try to reduce his approach time. There is also the possibility of sudden mechanical failure, causing a loss of altitude.

The ground control system relies on the aircraft's own height-encoding transponders to indicate its precise altitude. If the transponder was either not fitted on the Ilyushin-76 or was switched off or incorrectly tuned, the controllers on the ground may not have known that the two jets were on a collision course.

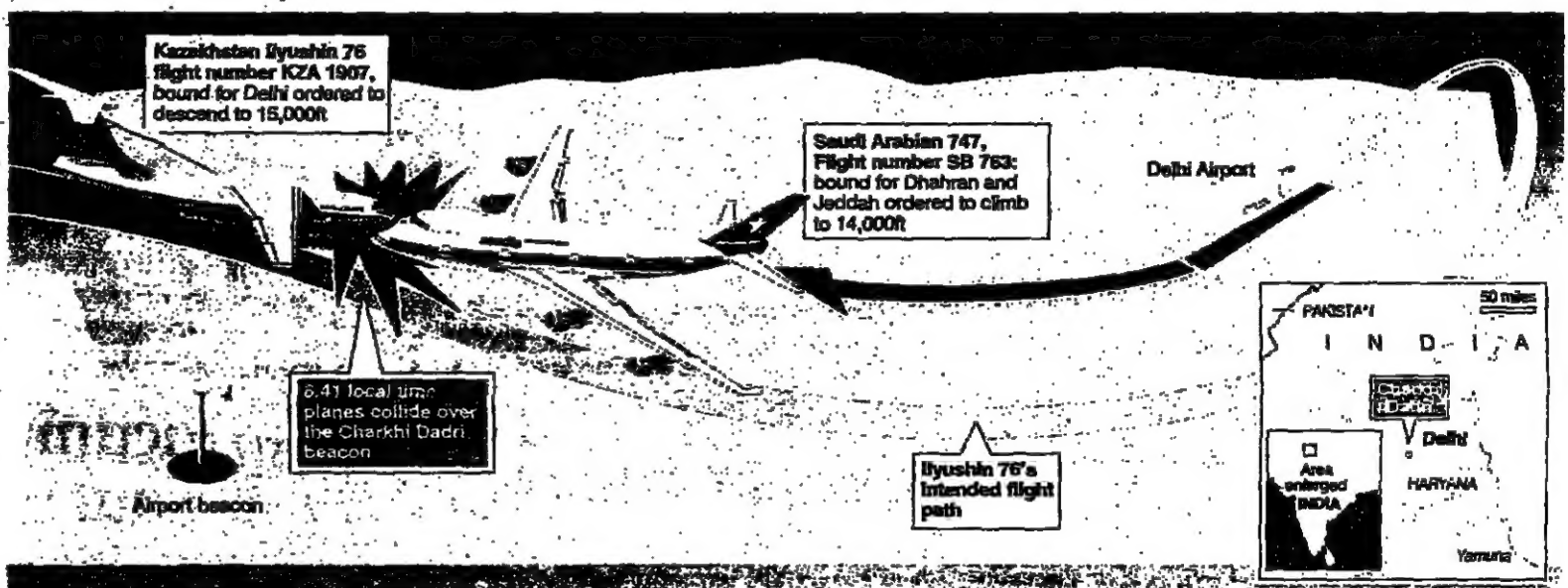
The Saudi Boeing was fitted with the latest navigation aids and transponders and their pilots are regarded as among the most proficient in the world.

It was also almost certainly fitted with a mid-air collision warning device called TCAS. Although this is only mandatory for aircraft flying in US airspace, a growing number of airlines in the rest of the world are being fitted with the equipment which gives a voice and visual warning of any impending collision. But it is only effective if the other aircraft is equipped with a working transponder.

H.D. Deve Gowda, the Indian Prime Minister, ordered



A Saudi Airways Boeing 747 similar to one lost in yesterday's mid-air crash with an Ilyushin-76, left, and below, how the disaster occurred



emergency services from Delhi into the area and appealed to the state government of Haryana, where the disaster happened, to mobilise resources.

Most of the wreckage fell around the village of Charkhi Dabri, although there were no immediate reports of anyone being killed by debris. The

crash area was cordoned off by police and roads were cleared to help emergency vehicles to gain access.

The Kazakh plane, carrying 27 passengers and ten crew, is believed to have been taking people on a shopping expedition to Delhi, a favourite destination because of the availability of cheap clothes.

It was India's worst air disaster and appears to rank as the world's third worst airline accident. Two Boeing 747s operated by PanAm and KLM collided on the ground at Tenerife in 1977, killing 582; a Japan Airlines Boeing 747 crashed into a mountain on a domestic flight in 1985, killing 520; and in 1974 a Turkish DC-

10 crashed northeast of Paris, killing 346. The worst mid-air collision before yesterday was in 1976 when a Trident and DC-9 collided over Zagreb with the loss of 176 lives.

Ranjana Chatterjee, chairman of the Airports Authority of India, denied there had been an error by air traffic controllers. There had been

tension between the management and the controllers recently over the suspension of some controllers over their work performance but these were said to have been resolved.

The black box from one of the aircraft was discovered last night, although it was trapped in wreckage.

Christmas post strike called off

A postal strike which threatened to disrupt Christmas deliveries has been averted after unions last night accepted a peace deal from the Royal Mail.

The Communication Workers Union is to ballot its members with a recommendation to accept a 3 per cent pay rise.

Priest sent porn on the Internet

A Roman Catholic priest sexually abused boys in his parish and used the Internet to pass details of what he had done to fellow paedophiles around the world.

Father Adrian McLeish, who held the largest known collection of illicit matter yet gathered electronically, was jailed for six years. Page 3

Major confronts EU over 48-hour ruling

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR, AND CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

JOHN MAJOR paved the way for confrontation with the European Union lasting up to and including the general election yesterday when he pledged to reverse a European Court of Justice verdict imposing a 48-hour maximum working week on Britain.

The Prime Minister, in a move that won the backing of most Tory MPs, and particularly the Euro-sceptic wing, announced he could not accept the ruling of the Luxembourg judges and that if it was not changed he would block any agreement in the inter-governmental conference shaping Europe's future.

As the European Commission accused Mr Major of trying to hold his EU colleagues to ransom, amendments were tabled by Britain in Brussels last night that would have the effect of overturning the ruling and block-

ing alleged "loopholes" to prevent related European laws being imposed on this country by the same route.

But the Commission delivered a quick and predictable



"Relax, they work only on Mondays and Tuesdays"

rebuff. Jacques Santer, its President, told Mr Major to get on with implementing the new rules as quickly as possible.

In a letter from Brussels to Downing Street, Mr Santer rejected the Prime Minister's call, in a letter earlier in the day, for the ruling to be reversed so British workers can be excluded.

Mr Major's tough line ensured that Britain's attitude to the ruling — giving workers the right not to be forced to work more than 48 hours against their will, a statutory entitlement to three weeks' paid holiday and a compulsory weekly rest day — would become a central election issue. Continued on page 2, col 3

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IRA steals arms cache in London

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

AN IRA active service unit raided a west London storage centre and carried off a terrorist cache hidden there, increasing fears that a Christmas bombing campaign is being planned. Scotland Yard said last night.

But the three-man gang had to search frantically to find what it was looking for — they used bolt cutters to open 55 of the 200 units in the centre. The raid at 4.40pm last Friday in Shepherd's Bush Place is about a mile from the base of Diarmuid O'Neill, the IRA member shot in a police operation in September.

All three raiders used assumed accents when they spoke. Two wore stocking masks, but an E-fit photo was issued for the third, who is said to be aged 22-25, just under 6ft, powerfully built and wearing a woolly hat and a hip length car coat. Commander John Grieve, head of



An E-fit photograph of one of the IRA raiders

Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch, said the unit, which the gang finally identified, had been rented for some time.

Police have been searching since February for up to 180lb of Semtex explosives linked to Edward O'Brien, the IRA bomber who blew himself up on a bus in the Aldwych.

Howard doubles cash to placate Tory gun rebels

By JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HOWARD tried to buy off an embarrassing rebellion by Tory MPs last night by doubling the amount of compensation for gun owners and excluding historical guns from the proposed ban on handguns.

A group of senior Tory backbenchers was threatening revolt against the

Government if the Home Secretary refused to increase the amount of compensation, which had been set at between £25 million and £50 million.

During the debate on the second reading of the Firearms Amendment Bill Mr Howard said that gun accessories such as reloaders, special sights and holsters would be included in the package. Officials admitted that this could raise the compensation to

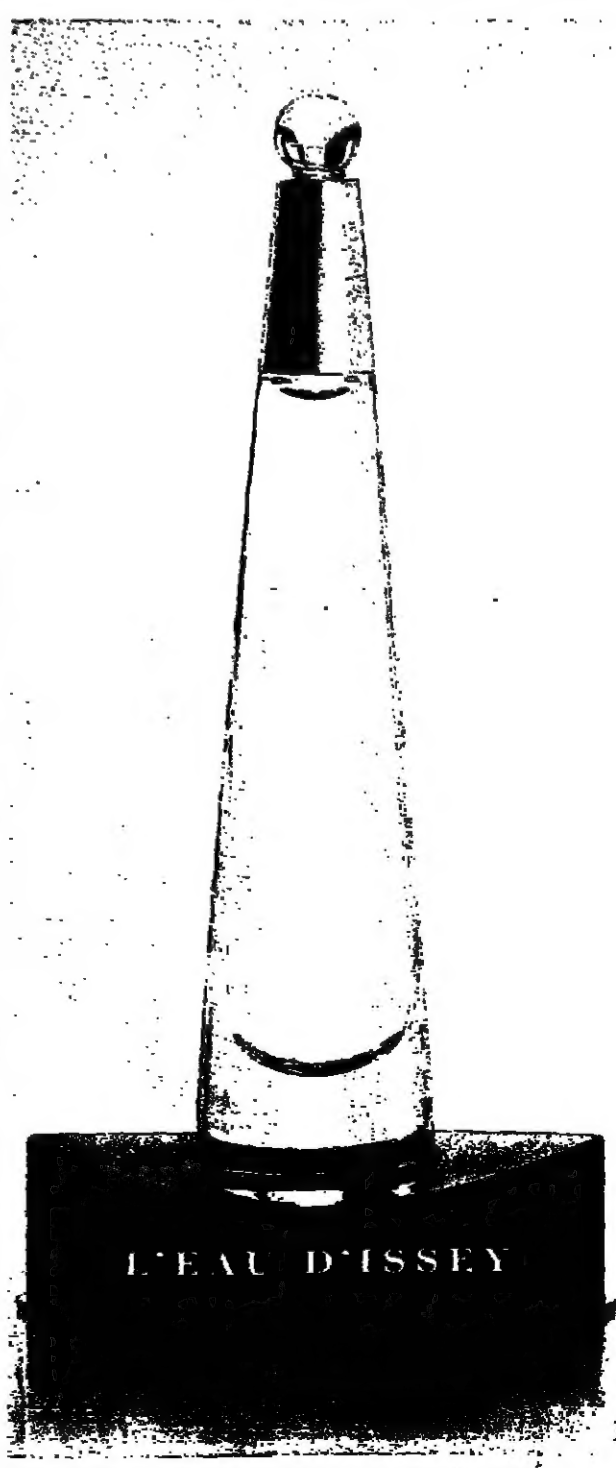
£100 million. Antique guns would be excluded from the ban as would muzzle-loading firearms and most handguns made before 1919.

Among the weapons which will be exempt from the new firearms law is the Webley service pistol, the standard weapon issued to British army officers during the two World Wars.

Michael Yardley, for the Sportsmen's Association, welcomed the con-

cessions but said the Bill was "fundamentally flawed". He said that if it became law it would lead to the loss of 2,000 jobs and cost the taxpayer £300 million in compensation.

Several MPs suggested that Mr Howard had not gone far enough and argued that gun clubs and their employees should be given further compensation for loss of income, if they went out of business.



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Party leaders welcome timely gift from Santer

Nothing is more fun than a public execution. Yesterday your sketchwriter took himself off to Committee Room 15 to watch the next instalment of the dismembering of the Tory whip who made the mistake of putting on paper what whips of both parties have always arranged in practice.

David Willetts. Were the cartoonist Bateman still alive, Mr Willetts would feature in one of his classic depictions of social gaffes: *The Man Who Wrote it Down*. One pictures the gawky confusion of the MP as older whips rush for the

door while moustachioed colleagues raise eyebrows over the brandy.

At the start of the proceedings, a white-haired old lady was shown by the policeman on duty to a front seat in the public gallery, presumably to knit by the guillotine.

Mr Willetts looks like a giant, scraggy chicken. Yesterday he was set upon by the Doberman-like Dale Campbell-Savours (Lab, Workington), who clearly sees himself as some sort of poor man's Perry Mason, interrupting the replies to his sneering questions. Mr Campbell-Savours became so obsessive



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

that he helped rescue Willetts from his drubbing at the more polite — but deadly — hands of Quentin Davies (Stamford & Spalding), on his own side, on Monday.

Take it from an old Parliamentary hand: this kind of investigation will never work. It runs right against the grain of the Commons ethos, as does the whole select committee system. The whips on both sides infiltrated select com-

mittee work from the start, and this episode throws a rare shaft of daylight on to the process. But nobody really wants to change it. Whether Labour, Liberal Democrat or Tory you simply do not attack your own colleagues in public unless you want to become a pariah. This what Quentin Davies now risks. Each party has ways of disciplining, or even destroying, its own Members in private. But never in front of the children.

To watch the proceedings of the Standards and Privileges Committee yesterday was to observe the clash of two cultures. The culture of party, ancient and integral to the place, versus the culture of neutral inquiry, an uncomfortable import. Party will prevail. The struggle, an awkward affair, was disturbing to witness, and I returned to the Chamber...

Where Father Christmas has visited MPs early, bringing an educational toy guaranteed to give the kiddies on both sides hours of fun. The toy is unbreakable, durable and comes with batteries. We refer, of course, to the European Working Time Directive. John Major must be grateful to Santa.

Yesterday he told MPs he had written to Santer to complain. Do not be fooled: complaining is part of the game.

The Directive provides something completely inconsequential about which all parties at Westminster can have a principled row. There is no danger of the Directive being implemented in the foreseeable future.

Not is there any danger that the PM will have to test

his anti-European missiles this side of the election — as Tony Blair reminded MPs yesterday.

Major can huff and puff merrily. If he loses the election, nothing matters. If he wins, then, a hero to his troops, he can march them sauntering down from the top of the hill while the champagne corks pop.

Meanwhile, Blair's troops are united behind him, while Major's cheer lustily behind their own leader. Nothing happens, and both men stay popular with their own side. What more can a party leader ask from Santa — or Santer?

Labour leaks 'woolly' White Paper

Fiction challenge over Dorrell's NHS casebooks

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR leaked a draft of a Government White Paper yesterday, to pre-empt an attempt to persuade the electorate that the health service was safe in Tory hands.

The White Paper, to be launched today by Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, commits the Government to a universal free health service funded from taxation. It uses nine fictitious case histories to exemplify the best the NHS can offer and to set a gold standard of care.

However, Labour accused Mr Dorrell of "personal electioneering" and issued its own list of seven allegedly real-life cases demonstrating the NHS failings. Chris Smith, the Shadow Health Secretary, said paper was an abuse of civil servants' time, and that its only purpose was to advance Mr Dorrell's candidature for Tory leader after the election.

"It contains no proposals for either legislative or executive action. It is merely a set of woolly aspirations and this is perhaps why he is slighing the House of Commons by refusing to make a ministerial statement," he said.

In its draft version, the White Paper pledges that the NHS will remain a universal free service, funded from taxation. It rejects warnings, notably from Sir Duncan Nichol, former NHS chief executive, that demographic pressures and rising expectations will render it unaffordable without extra, private sources of funds.

The paper says: "The Gov-



Smith: "People won't recognise this NHS"

ernment is firm in its intention to continue providing the funding for the NHS to carry out its work. It remains committed to real-terms increases in NHS spending year by year.

It says that priorities must be set and difficult choices made, but it rules out rationing of services at a national level, on the ground that blanket bans on treatments undermine clinical freedom, and that for every treatment there are always some patients who may benefit.

A series of illustrative examples, with named patients, chart the ideal service the Government wishes to see. The White Paper says: "The people in the case studies are fictitious, but the description of the care they receive is based on the very best of current practice, the elements of which are already available

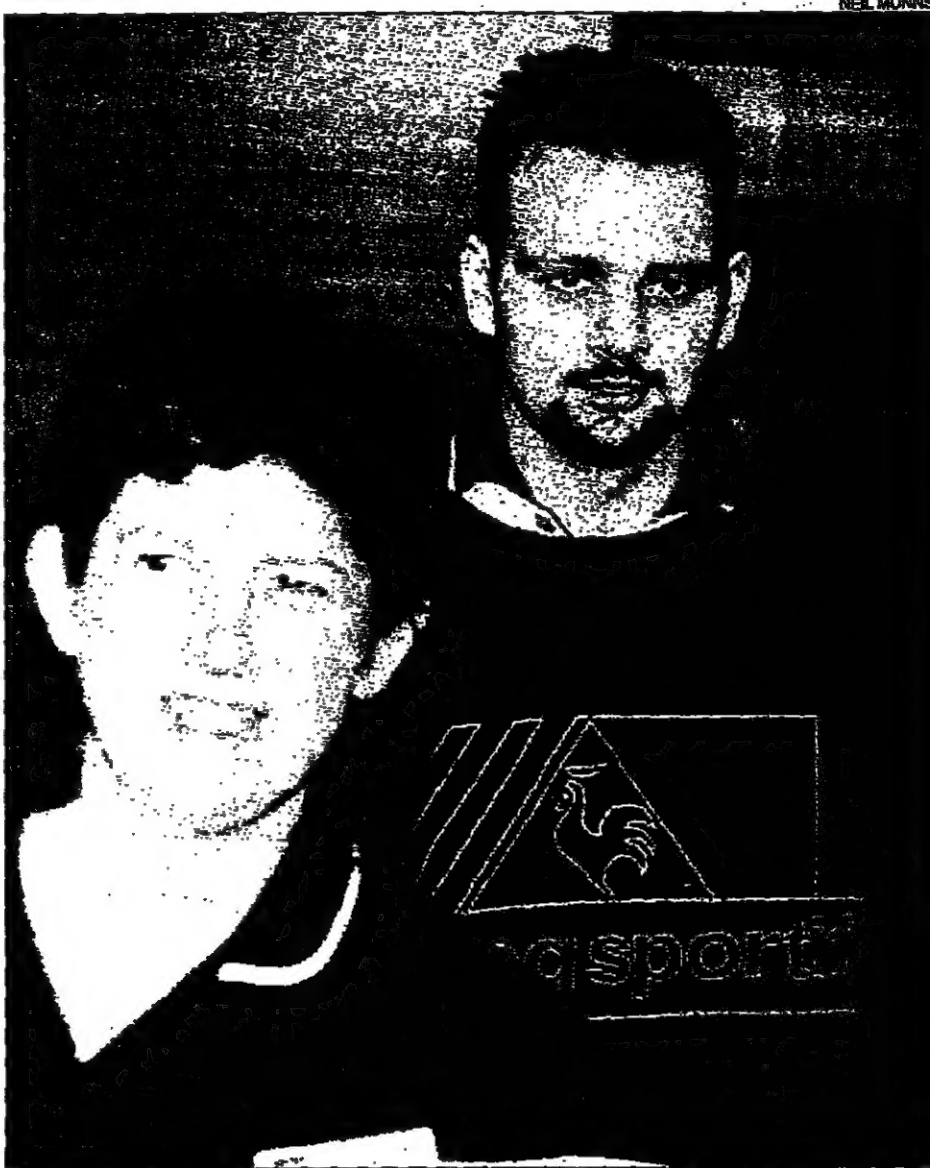
in the NHS today. These studies demonstrate the kind of care which people can expect to receive when we achieve our ambitions for the NHS."

The cases range from a young man injured in a road accident, who receives prompt neurosurgical treatment, to an elderly woman with a painful hip who gets a well-planned replacement operation with full post-operative care.

Mr Smith said: "This White Paper describes an NHS that many people simply will not recognise. It is the stuff of fairy tales and offers no solutions to the real problems."

In the White Paper, Garry Hunter, 22, is trapped inside his car after an accident. A farmer dials 999 and a paramedic arrives within eight minutes. The patient is taken to hospital where the trauma team assess his condition, transmit a brain scan to another hospital with a specialist neurosurgery unit to which he is promptly transferred for surgery.

In Labour's example, Malcolm Murray, 45, was badly injured after being hit by a van in March 1994. He was taken by ambulance to Queen Mary's hospital, Sidcup, Kent, where a brain scan revealed he needed specialist neurosurgery. Nearby hospitals were full and a bed was eventually found 200 miles away in Leeds. Mr Murray was flown to Leeds by helicopter and underwent surgery eight hours after he was first admitted to hospital in Kent, but died next day.



A "very lucky" Simon Willmott leaving the Royal Brompton Hospital yesterday

Concrete slab victim given 50-50 chance walks out of hospital

A MOTORIST who was critically injured when his car was hit by a slab of concrete walked out of hospital yesterday. His consultant said Simon Willmott was "a very lucky young man".

Mr Willmott, 22, had spent two weeks in intensive care after the block, thrown from a bridge over the M3 near Hook, Hampshire, smashed

through his car windscreen and hit his chest, causing complex injuries. At one stage of his time in the intensive care units at two hospitals, doctors said that his chances of survival were fifty-fifty.

As he eschewed the use of a wheelchair to leave the Royal Brompton Hospital in south-west London, he told nurses:

"I appreciate everything you have all done for me." He got into a hospital car which took him to his local hospital at Camberley, Surrey, Frimley Park, where he was originally taken after his injury on October 17. Kim Fox, consultant cardiologist, said: "I think he is aware of how lucky he is. It could have gone the other way."

Gaddafi revenge threat to back IRA

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

THE Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi, yesterday threatened to "intervene in the civil war between Britain and the IRA" in retaliation for the formation of a four-nation European force designed to step into crises in the Mediterranean area.

He said the move amounted to a "declaration of war by Europe" against the North African states. Britain is not part of the new force, named Eurofor, which was unveiled at the weekend in Florence.

The force will be able to draw up to 10,000 troops from Italy, France, Spain and Portugal to undertake humanitarian and peacekeeping missions in the Mediterranean region. There is also to be a new joint naval force called Euromarfor, led by a French aircraft carrier. Both forces will be at the disposal of Nato and the UN as well as the Western European Union.

Colonel Gaddafi, regarded by the Western powers as an unpredictable sponsor of terrorism, said Eurofor was itself "new international terrorism, and we utterly reject it". Although the Libyan leader's remarks were dismissed by some diplomats as "his usual rhetorical posturing", they caused dismay in Italy, which had hoped Colonel Gaddafi might attend the World Food Summit, which opens in Rome today.

Colonel Gaddafi, who has boasted of supplying arms to the IRA, singled out Britain, which was engaged in a civil war, "with bombs and guns in the middle of London". "Perhaps we need a force to intervene in Britain" he said. "We could also have a force to intervene in the Balkans and another to intervene in the European states."

Message aimed more at home front than battle in Europe

BRUSSELS threatening jobs versus minimum holidays: John Major and Tony Blair both believe they can turn the argument over the working time directive to advantage. This is little to do with the merits of the directive — which British ministers did not oppose in the past, as Sir David Steel pointed out yesterday. It is more about which issues move votes. The electoral impact depends on how the argument is framed.

The Tories want the debate to be about national rights against Brussels intrusion, not just over yesterday's ruling — which allows many exemptions — but about whether it

would open the way to similar legislation that might undermine job creation. The Government has to play the nationalist card to make the competitiveness case. The Tories reckon that they will gain from a confrontation with Brussels — no deal on anything at the inter-governmental conference without a treaty amendment to ensure that the working time directive does not apply in Britain and that no similar legislation can be imposed upon Britain. By contrast, Labour wants to focus on the right of working families to have three weeks' paid holiday a year and not to have to work for more than an average of 48

hours a week unless they want to do so. Labour emphasises the flexibility in the directive rather than the European aspect. In particular, Labour leaders want to play down the pressure for more regulations from the European Parliament and parts of the Brussels Commission. Mr Blair and Gordon Brown interpret "social Europe" in minimalist, fairness terms. But there are weaknesses in Labour's claims that Britain can resist measures that would add to business costs, especially if we sign up to the social

chapter. Europe has been a double-edged issue for the Tories. Their policies have in the past been preferred by the public, but they have recently suffered from their deep disunity. To his frequent frustration, Mr Major has been unable to gain much from his European battles. Five years ago, at the same stage of the last parliament, MORI gave the Tories an 18-point lead over Labour as the party having the best policies on Europe. Labour had turned this into a six-point lead by spring 1994 and they

retained a two-point lead over the Tories this summer.

However, taking a strong line on Europe may be a way that the Tories can win back waverers. While only one in ten voters regards Europe as the most important issue facing Britain today, according to MORI, 18 per cent of Tory supporters and 16 per cent of those who have switched away from the Tories since the last election do. It is third in list of importance for these switchers, while it is rated as the most important issue by just 6 per cent of Labour loyalists.

The problem for Mr Major is that the Government has in the past had

to compromise with its own sceptics and the rest of Europe — from the battles on qualified majority voting to this summer's mishandled confrontation over beef exports. But Mr Major has two tactical advantages now: first, that his own party is united, bar a handful of committed pro-Europeans; and, secondly, that his brinkmanship can be stretched beyond the next election. The conclusion of the IGC will be next June. So most of what we heard yesterday, and will hear until next spring, was aimed at British voters, not other European leaders.

PETER RIDDELL

Major pledges to reverse 48-hour week

Continued from page 1

sue, apparently pleasing strategists in both main parties. Tony Blair immediately squared up to the Prime Minister in the Commons, asking if he would fight the next election on the slogan: Vote Tory for no right to a holiday.

Mr Major, who sees Labour's stance as a means of showing it is in favour of more regulation and, therefore, a threat to jobs, declared: "Britain wants good jobs, not worthless directives."

A handful of pro-European Tories voiced concern about his hard line, but

Mr Major said: "I will not accept what has been determined by the courts today and when we reach the end of the IGC I shall demand a change or there will be no end of the IGC."

As Mr Blair swiftly pointed out, the IGC is not due to end until next June, after the British general election. He claimed Mr Major was already looking for an "escape route". However, senior ministers made plain that Mr Major's tough line would be evident at the Dublin summit next month.

Ministers called the ruling the "thin

end of the wedge" and said if Britain did not act to close the loophole a raft of new EU social legislation would be introduced by the same route.

One small government victory was the court finding that the compulsory rest day need not be a Sunday.

About five million public sector workers will be covered by the ruling from November 23, but most already have similar or more favourable agreements.

John Monks, the TUC General Secretary, called the ruling "great

news". Adair Turner, the CBI Director-General, said it was "legislation at its worst".

Brussels officials were delighted. "This is a good day for social Europe and for those who believe employees should have the right to say no to excessive working hours," said Padraig Flynn, Social Affairs Commissioner.

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See page 43 for further details

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Six years' jail for trusted cleric who passed on details of boys he had abused

Paedophile priest sent porn on the Internet

REPORTS BY PAUL WILKINSON AND RUTH GLEDHILL

A ROMAN Catholic priest sexually abused boys in his parish and used the Internet to pass details of what he had done to fellow paedophiles around the world.

Father Adrian McLeish, 45, held the largest known collection of illicit matter yet gathered electronically. He had amassed a vast store of obscene pictures and drawings in his presbytery and exchanged thousands of explicit e-mail messages with other paedophiles.

McLeish, priest at St Joseph's church in Gilesgate, Durham, was jailed yesterday by Newcastle upon Tyne Crown Court for six years. His activities were exposed a year ago as police set up an international inquiry into the distribution of paedophile material by computer.

When he was arrested, McLeish tried to hide the depth of his involvement, telling police that he had only a minor interest in child pornography and had sent one or two indecent photographs to people on the Internet. Officers seized four computers that he had built himself and began examining a huge library of disks, many of which had been erased.

McLeish had two hard disks which he referred to as his "nice disk" and his "naughty disk". In the days leading up to his arrest he destroyed numerous pornographic files and a number of videotapes he had bought in Amsterdam.

On the night before his arrest, on December 19 last year, he downloaded more than 100 pornographic pictures, a task which took him from midnight until 2am. When police arrived at 8am they had all been wiped. Police sent the disks to Paul Hicks, a forensic scientist based in Wetherby, Yorkshire, who managed to retrieve much of the information.

Yesterday McLeish admitted 12 specimen charges of

indecent assaults against two 10-year-old boys, one aged 12 and another aged 18. He also admitted distributing indecent photographs, possessing them with intent to distribute them and being involved in the importation of pornographic videos of children.

To his parishioners, McLeish was a well-respected figure and the families of his victims had trusted him implicitly. After his arrest he went to see each of the boys and asked them not to betray him. One was told that he would be thought of as homosexual if he spoke to anyone.

Beatrice Bolton, for the prosecution, said: "All four boys came from families who were involved with the Catholic Church and who had a great personal liking and trust for McLeish. They were quite content to allow their children to spend time with him, including staying the night in some cases, sure they would be safe in his hands."

"The boys are finding it extremely difficult to come to

terms with the breach of trust and the loyalty they felt towards the priest. They all want to get on with their lives, but it's another matter whether they will be able to or not."

"One boy wants to move house because he is aware that his address was circulated on the Internet. The boys have all had bad dreams and their behaviour has changed."

Mr Justice Moses told McLeish: "You corrupted those children and damaged them emotionally. You, and other paedophiles like you, dangerously delude yourselves if you think there is one iota of care, affection or even thought for those children. There is none."

The Right Rev Ambrose Griffiths, Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, said after the case: "Father McLeish has betrayed the trust placed on him and I am shocked and disheartened by his actions. I apologise unreservedly for what he has done and the great harm he has caused to individual children, their families and the parish of St Joseph's."

McLeish trained for the priesthood at Ushaw College in Durham in the early 1970s. He first offended in 1989, when he was a junior priest in Wallsend, Tyneside. He befriended a 12-year-old boy and kissed and cuddled him before enticing him into sex acts while showing him pornographic videos of men.

In 1991 burglars tipped off police that they had found the videos at the presbytery, but McLeish denied any connection. Soon afterwards, he moved to Durham but he said that there was no link between the burglary and his decision to switch churches.

The police discovered that McLeish was linked to the Internet through at least four different companies and had a privacy program so that his communications could not be read by anyone else. His private code was "Overhead the moon is beaming".

McLeish admitted corresponding with a German paedophile and sending him indecent photographs of boys of 14. He also admitted swapping pictures of 18-year-olds with an American named Mike Rhinehart, and receiving pictures from a Jan Erich in Sweden.

Miss Bolton said: "The correspondence from his computer demonstrates he was a paedophile involved in an international paedophile ring on the Internet in which he connected regularly with at least nine other people in Sweden, Germany, France, New Zealand and the USA."

Police have passed information on up to 20 men gleaned from the priest's files to the National Crime Intelligence Service's paedophile unit. They include a teacher, a doctor, a psychologist, a student and a computer expert. One also worked as a child's outfitter.

A team of four policemen, led by Detective Inspector Jeff Watson, spent seven months reading thousands of pages of pornographic material from McLeish's files. Mr Watson, who has two teenage children, said he and colleagues were appalled by some of the things they discovered. "There were 2,000 pictures stored on just one high-powered disk. The written stuff was probably worse of all."

"Without doubt this has had an effect on us. You cannot look at that many pictures and read so much horrendous stuff



Father Adrian McLeish: he admitted four charges of indecent assault on boys

and not be affected by it. Every person who was talking to him on the Internet had some child that they were abusing. We have seen pictures of children from America who we know were being abused."

"I feel very sorry for the boys he's attacked. These children have really gone through it, bearing in mind that a priest to many people in the Catholic Church is a very powerful person. McLeish misused the priesthood and betrayed the trust of the boys he abused. At least one of them

still feels he is responsible for sending this man to prison and he still loves him."

David Robson, QC, in mitigation, said: "This is a tragic case because there is no doubt he was a highly intelligent man. He was head of his year at school and was a fine musician and noted for his musical activities. He was also, as far as the world knew, a fine parish priest. He was from a highly religious background and his family, although devastated by this, is continuing to support him."

Nicholas Elliott-Kemp, the headmaster, said a security fence and closed-circuit cameras would be installed at the school. "All schools need to be vigilant. You should not build schools in the middle of the city without fences around them."

"This is a precaution we have been asking for ten years," he said.

"Our staff are well trained in defusing situations with outsiders and as soon as one of my teachers appeared today these youths fled."

Pupils at the school described how the gang approached the boys. One girl said: "The gang came on to the school and went up to this boy and said to him 'You are too rude' and started beating him up. All the students respected the two of them and they didn't deserve this."

home up for sale after graffiti alleging things their son had done was sprayed on walls near by. However, they have been unable to find a buyer. Detective Inspector Jeff Watson, who led the police inquiry, said: "They are trapped there, living near to the church, in a house they cannot sell with a mortgage they do not want. They have not been back to the church since this happened and the mother has suffered a great deal of ill health recently." Another family had been rebuffed by the council.

Police are hoping that the attack was caught by surveillance cameras on the road outside the school. It is believed that the youths knew their attackers, who were not from the school.

Nicholas Elliott-Kemp, the headmaster, said a security fence and closed-circuit cameras would be installed at the school. "All schools need to be vigilant. You should not build schools in the middle of the city without fences around them."

"This is a precaution we have been asking for ten years," he said.

"Our staff are well trained in defusing situations with outsiders and as soon as one of my teachers appeared today these youths fled."

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Gang stabs two at Lawrence case boy's school

BY ED HARRIS

TWO pupils from the school attended by the killer of headmaster Philip Lawrence were beaten and stabbed yesterday by a rival gang of youths.

The boys, aged 13 and 14, were pounced on by up to 18 youths and hit over the head with bottles as they walked out of the school in northwest London at lunchtime. One of the boys was slashed across the hand with a craft knife.

The two victims were taken to St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, for treatment where they were treated and later discharged.

The school, Quintin Kynaston, in St John's Wood, is near the school where Mr Lawrence was stabbed to death by Leroo Chindamo last year.

Chindamo, a member of a self-styled "Triad" gang, was convicted at the Old Bailey of murdering Mr Lawrence and jailed earlier this year. Police said yesterday that there had been a history of violence between rival gangs in the area. The attackers are all believed to be of South American origin and their victims Somalis.

Superintendent Richard Miles said: "It was a cowardly attack on two defenceless boys. There have been a few problems with rivalry between gangs in the area. There is no evidence that these are related in any way with the Leroo Chindamo incident."

"It was a particularly unfortunate attack as the headmaster has been working closely with us to prevent something like this from happening."

Police are hoping that the attack was caught by surveillance cameras on the road outside the school. It is believed that the youths knew their attackers, who were not from the school.

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Victims' families intend to sue Catholic Church for damages

THE families of at least three of the children abused by Father Adrian McLeish are to bring a private damages action against the Roman Catholic Church.

Charles McCain, a solicitor representing the families of three of the boys, said: "The children and their families have suffered unimaginable harm at the hands of Adrian McLeish and their lives have been torn apart. It is impossible to say how long it will take for their lives to be repaired as a result. Legal aid has been agreed

and I have been instructed to pursue a claim for damages."

"It is hoped that the church authorities will be good enough to deal with this case quickly and to place few obstacles in their way, so they can get on with rebuilding their lives. Contrary to what has been said in court today, the families believe they have been offered very little support and help by the Church for what they have had to endure."

The mother of one of the boys said: "I can't believe he's only got

six years. We have been to hell and back, our lives have been destroyed. My son will never be the same again and both his and my health have suffered as a consequence of this."

The boys and their families have been receiving counselling since the beginning of the year, when local church authorities first learnt of McLeish's activities. Father Dennis Tindall, a child protection officer for the Hexham and Newcastle diocese, said that even those closest to McLeish did not

suspect that anything was amiss until the police raided the presbytery. None of the boys had complained to their parents or reported what had been done to them until after the raid.

He said: "All this came to light just before Christmas last year. Over the ensuing weeks, as they managed to decipher the computers, we began to realise the scale of what we were dealing with."

"Even the people who worked closely with him never suspected anything like this. I have worked

closely with the parents since then, and the church support services have been made available to the families and any other parishioners who have been hurt by this."

"Adrian McLeish will be permanently suspended from the priesthood and will never be able to take up a job with children again. The Church will be waiting for him when he comes out of prison and will offer him the best treatment possible at a special psychological unit for sexual offenders."

One of the families has put its

prosecution, said that the killing stemmed "from the oldest motive in the world - if I cannot have her, no one can".

Mr Webber was said to have planned the attack, carried out after he walked across fields to the woman's caravan, picking up an iron bar which, the court heard, was used by Richard Frost to load silage bales.

Miss Hurlstone had been to a pub on October 20 last year, with a man she had been seeing for a couple of weeks. She went to the main house after 11pm to ask Richard Frost to walk her to her caravan, a request she had never made before, the trainer told the jury.

She was found beaten to death at her caravan. Her injuries included ten major head wounds, one of which penetrated her brain. Mr Webber was said to have admitted the killing in a second police interview, saying he wanted to "get his own back" for the way she had made him "look small".

He allegedly smashed the window and got into the caravan. She had woken and said: "What are you doing here?" He is alleged to have replied: "I am here to teach you a lesson."

The police statement continued: "I know I had the bar in my hand but that was to frighten her. The plan was not to hit her." But he was in a temper: "I hit her so much I was out of puff."

Afterwards, Mr Webber allegedly drove home, got out of his bloodstained clothing, then drove to a friend's house where he had a bath, changed and dumped the weapon and soiled clothes. The trial continues today.

Wilson-Smith, QC, for the defence, suggested that Mr Webber appeared to be quite fond of her. Mrs Frost said: "Not necessarily fond. He tried to possess her."

Mr Wilson-Smith said: "He was basically like a little adoring puppy towards Jessie." Mrs Frost replied: "Yes, running around after her trying to do things for her. She let him do it, yes." The stabler who found the body, Jessica

Neal, 18, said Mr Webber used to give the girl presents, including an expensive peagrace cat, and was "extremely possessive" in the way he talked about her. But Miss Hurlstone "did not want to know" and "only wanted friendship, and that was all," she said. She told Mr Wilson-Smith that she did not know Mr Webber had made a will in favour of Miss Hurlstone. Roderick Denyer, QC, for the

Jockey tells of lovesick worker's threat to murdered stablegirl

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A JOCKEY spoke yesterday of a chilling remark made by a farmworker who had an unrequited love for a stablegirl. Jimmy Frost said the man had vowed that "if she had anybody else, he would kill her".

The National Hunt jockey told Exeter Crown Court that he had brushed off the remark lightly, but added: "It felt as if it was meant seriously."

A few months later, the stable girl, Jessie Hurlstone, 27, was found battered to death with 30 injuries, after returning from a drink with another man. The farmworker, Stephen Webber, 39, denies murdering her at Hawson Stables, near Buckfastleigh, south Devon, owned by Mr Frost's father.

The court had been told that Mr Webber was always trying to help Miss Hurlstone, gave her gifts and had even made a will leaving his home and possessions to her, but she wanted only friendship.

Mr Frost, son of the National Hunt trainer Richard Frost, told the jury that Mr Webber, whom he had known since youth, discussed Jessie with him on more than one occasion. "He made it pretty clear he had strong feelings for her," he said.

Miss Hurlstone had worked there for about 4½ years and was "dedicated, cheerful and enjoyed her job". He and Mr Webber were working together in the summer of last year when the farmworker allegedly made the remark about killing her.

Valerie Frost, the jockey's mother, recalled that Mr Webber had questioned her about the stablegirl's movements. When Christopher



The "dedicated" stablegirl, Jessie Hurlstone, the jockey Jimmy Frost, left, and Stephen Webber



Wilson-Smith, QC, for the defence, suggested that Mr Webber appeared to be quite fond of her. Mrs Frost said: "Not necessarily fond. He tried to possess her."

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mel-last back.*

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College was set to field woman in men's eight until rowing officials put their oar in

Cambridge team loses girl with pulling power

By RUSSELL JENKINS

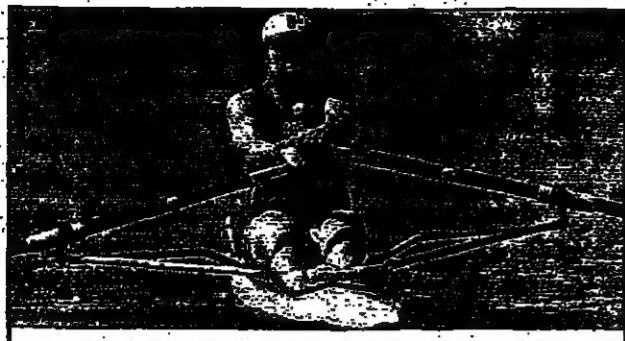
A NEW rower seemed like an ideal find for a Cambridge University men's eight. The 6ft student weighed in at 11½ stone and had plenty of pulling power. Nobody minded that she was female.

Jenny Fox proved herself an intensive training with the Blues Development Squad during the summer. It was only when she was selected for a race that the team thought they had better confirm there would be no problems with the Amateur Rowing Association.

Last night her short career in men's rowing was at an end after the ARA emphasised that men's teams were still for men only and that mixed teams were allowed only at specific events.

Miss Fox, a 19-year-old veterinary student from Twickenham, west London, said: "It is ridiculous. I am basically taller than some of the men's eight and nearly on a par with strength, but I am not allowed to row."

She was introduced to rowing last year as a first-year student and is the powerhouse of most women's crews with whom she rows. She enjoyed four weeks' intensive training in July and Mike Rogers, the Robinson College captain, tested his new recruit's prowess with several punishing work-outs on the river. It was thought that there was no



Women are becoming increasingly successful in endurance sports and a steady improvement in British women rowers led to a fifth place at the Atlanta Olympics for the single-sculler Gail Batten (above).

Jürgen Grobler, the ARA's chief men's coach, is convinced that women are growing stronger and are steadily gaining on their male counterparts. At the fourth of the river race on the Thames at the weekend, a female crew came 42nd out of 450 mostly male crews. Mr Grobler, who once trained the top East German women rowers, said there was a 7 to 10 per cent "performance gap" between the sexes, but this was narrowing.

Women are becoming more successful in most endurance sports, including rowing, he said, although inexperience may hold them back. "There is no difference in technique. Women use a little bit more upper body swing to compensate for their lower strength, especially in the arms. The problem in Britain is that women start quite late because there is no tradition, as there is in men's rowing, of developing the sport at schools like Eton and Westminster."

reason why she should not compete and, when injury forced a team member to drop out of the university's Autumn heads of the river races, Miss Fox won the spare place on merit.

Yesterday she said: "I am

upset because I was looking forward to it. If anything, a woman rowing in a men's boat is a disadvantage, whilst a man rowing in a woman's boat, would be a clear advantage."

"I have comparable

strength with some in the boat, but the training with the university really helped to improve my technique.

"I think the ban is a bit silly really. Our boat captain wanted to put out the best eight. Someone was injured and I was the replacement. I don't see why I should not be allowed to race."

A spokesman for Robinson College said: "We are annoyed to lose her because she has been training very hard with us. It is a shame that she is not allowed to row in the event, under the ruling system that we use."

Rosemary Napp, ARA national manager, said that the heads-of-river races — begun originally as winter time trials — were governed by the association's rules, which outlawed mixed crews apart from specific events.

She said that the rules of the sport were being rewritten and moves to break down the gender barrier were currently before the ARA council.

Miss Fox now intends to concentrate on the college women's eight. During term time, she can manage only three early-morning sessions on the river each week, because she has to concentrate on her studies.

She believes that women are getting better and stronger. "There is still quite a big gap but there are women coming up who are amazing," she said.



Jenny Fox in action. She said: "I am taller than some of the men's eight"

Cambridge was Said's first choice for donation

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

WAFIC SAID, the Middle East businessman who has pledged £20 million to establish a business school at Oxford University, offered the money first to his alma mater of Cambridge. *The Times* discloses today.

In an interview, Mr Said says that his donation — one of the biggest to a British university — would have gone to Cambridge had it not already begun work on its own school. Cambridge's school was named after its principal donor, Sir Paul Judge.

Mr Said has given Oxford until February to reach agreement on a site for the £40 million school that will bear his name. Dons rejected a plan to build on the University Club playing fields at last week's meeting of Congregation, the dons' parliament, but there will be a postal ballot of staff if an alternative site cannot be found by next term.



Said has pledged £20m to Oxford

Mr Said said he would find it "regrettable, heartbreaking, a terrible blow" to withdraw the donation, but he would have no choice. "Everyone would lose," he added.

Professor John Kay, who is

to head the School of Management Studies, said he would call off his move to Oxford if there was no agreement. "I am less demanding about the timetable because it might be that there were other solutions the university could explore, but I have always said my appointment was conditional on the scheme going through." Professor Kay said he was not aware of other sites in central Oxford that would be suitable. "People have looked before and not come up with anything."

David Wilson, the chief executive of the Radcliffe Infirmary, ruled out the hospital as an alternative site for the school. The ten-acre site has been a target for the university, but the hospital is not expected to move until 1992 and the business school is planned to open in 1998.

Valerie Grove, page 17

Oil disaster pilot clears his name

By JONATHAN PRYNN

THE pilot of the *Sea Empress* oil tanker, which ran aground off Milford Haven in February, spilling thousands of tons of oil, has been cleared of incompetence after an appeal.

John Pearn, 34, who was responsible for guiding the 147,000-tonne ship towards a Texaco oil refinery when it struck rocks, was demoted by a disciplinary tribunal in June and banned from piloting vessels over 90,000 tonnes.

The ban was lifted yesterday by the harbour authority, which accepted his defence that he had calculated the ship's course correctly, but other unknown factors had contributed to the vessel running aground.

Lord Bingham of Cornhill, the Lord Chief Justice, did not say (report, November 11) that "a clash between the judiciary and Government over sentencing would dominate the run-up to the General Election". He did not describe the Home Secretary's sentencing plans as a recipe for "tensions" and "unhappiness and challenge"; these remarks referred to the possible operation of the proposed new system of remission. We apologise for the errors.

A photograph accompanying a report yesterday on Dr Robert Fine, a lecturer who is seeking an injunction in the High Court against Mrs Eileen McLardy, was not of Mrs McLardy but of a woman entirely unconnected with the case. We apologise to those concerned.

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Prophet of doom says deadly collision is inevitable and could destroy half the world's population

Scientist accuses Britain of ignoring asteroid threat

By Nigel Hawkes
SCIENCE EDITOR

HALF the world's population could be snuffed out by a doomsday asteroid — and Britain is doing nothing about it, according to an astronomer. "It isn't a matter of if, it's a matter of when," Dr Duncan Steele told a meeting at the British National Space Centre in London yesterday.

"We know of at least 200 craters on Earth caused by impacts," he said. "The chances that one will hit us is a low-probability event, but it's also a high-consequence event." Dr Steele said that Britain had done nothing, despite a call from the Council of Europe to take the threat seriously.

He estimates that an asteroid large enough to kill a quarter and maybe as much as half of the world's population strikes on average once every 100,000 years. Given the number killed, that means that the risk to the average person of dying in this way is

TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

Since the search for near-Earth asteroids began, a number of near-misses have been recorded:

■ January 17 1991: an asteroid nine metres across passes within 100,000 miles of Earth — less than half the distance to the Moon.

■ May 20 1993: an asteroid between five and 11 metres across misses Earth by 80,000 miles. It isn't spotted until it has already passed.

■ 1994: two asteroids pass less than 100,000 miles from the Earth.

■ 1989: a really big asteroid, 1989 FC, which may have been 500 metres across, comes within 450,000 miles. It sounds like a long way, but the Earth had been in that exact spot just six hours earlier.

one in 5,000 — four times as great as the chances of being killed in an air crash.

Smaller asteroid impacts are much more common, but their consequences are less extreme. In 1908 an object estimated to be just 30 metres in diameter struck Siberia and laid waste an area of forest more than 30 miles across.

Events like this may occur once a century. Most are likely to be over the oceans or

relatively uninhabited land, but a direct hit on a city could cause huge destruction.

The astronomers at the meeting agreed that the chances of a collision were small but that the subject demanded further study. In spite of strong calls from some present, however, they stopped short of urging more spending to investigate the threat or ways of preventing it.

After years as a fringe

activity, searching for doomsday asteroids and wayward comets has become respectable. Earlier this year, the US government launched a programme, and France, Germany and Italy have all responded to the Council of Europe's call, made in March. Last week Edward Teller, the American scientist often described as the father of the hydrogen bomb, wrote to the British and Australian Prime Ministers to express concern over lack of action.

Dr Steele has personal reasons for trying to raise the temperature, as his grants — from the Australian Government and the US Air Force — to conduct an asteroid search from an Anglo-Australian telescope in New South Wales, end at the end of this year.

"Once that finishes there won't be any observations made from the Southern Hemisphere," he says. He believes that a full surveillance programme could be set up with six two-metre telescopes, each costing about



\$5 million. Money spent on diverting asteroids would be justified only if one was identified on a collision course, he says. "Surveillance costs very little, prevention a lot."

If one were identified shortly before it hit, nothing could be done. But a greater likelihood is that it would be identified many orbits in ad-

vance of an actual collision, allowing time to plan how to deal with it. The favoured solution would be to launch a rocket armed with a nuclear warhead and explode it close to the asteroid. The idea is not to break it up, which could cause even more trouble, but to generate enough thrust to push it off its collision course

with Earth. "People say it's science fiction, but it's not," Dr Steele insists. "We have got to take it seriously. There's plenty of expertise in Britain, but the Government is doing nothing."

One of three meteorites from Mars expected to fetch millions of dollars at an auc-

tion next week was acquired from the Natural History Museum, it emerged yesterday. The meteorite would have been swapped with a private buyer for other valuable material before the prospect of life on the planet was raised by NASA scientists.

Alan Coren, page 18

Doctors grapple with drinking problem in court

By Adrian Lee

ONE OF the few points on which experts agreed in the High Court yesterday, as they grappled with the case of an executive whose drinking habits cost him a job, was that deciding exactly what constituted an alcohol problem was a difficult task.

Did Peter Baker's estimated weekly intake of four bottles of wine and a self-confessed drinking spree in Monte Carlo make him unemployable?

Mr Baker, 53, is suing the doctor who believed the answer was yes and, after a medical recommendation, he should not get a £45,000-a-year international sales post with NBC Europe. Dr George Keye estimated Mr Baker consumed 35 units of alcohol a week and concluded that drinking was responsible for an abnormal blood test.

Brian Gazzard, a consultant physician at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, told the court that an alcohol level of 35 units — a unit is equivalent to half a pint of beer — was not in itself dangerous. However, the doctor, who gave his colleague Dr Keye a second opinion in February 1991 and agreed with his diagnosis, said that coupled with the TV festival in Monte Carlo, when Mr Baker drank a bottle of wine a day, it was indicative of a pattern often seen in people who drank but claimed not to.

Dr Keye, of Kensington, west London, told the court that Mr Baker's drinking was excessive, according to the then recognised ceiling of 21 units a week for men and 14 for women. In any case, the

blood tests indicated that Mr Baker had seriously underestimated his intake.

"He said that Mr Baker's guarded replies when questioned about his drinking also played a part in his decision. NBC's parent company, General Electric Technical Services, took a strict view on alcohol. Dr Michael Rehmar of General Electric's medical centre in America, said the company had become less tolerant of alcohol in the late 1980s. "There was a recognition that alcohol interfered with executive decision-making ability. They made errors involving hundreds of millions of dollars."

Professor Neil McIntyre, professor of medicine at the Royal Free Hospital in north London, did not believe Mr Baker's alcohol intake to be exceptional. "I would have thought 35 units a week should not alarm anybody about a person's ability to function in a work capacity," he said.

Dr Anne Cockcroft, director of the Royal Free's health and safety unit, said she did not believe a blood test of the type used was the best way of diagnosing an alcohol problem. She said sickness and absenteeism were far better indicators.

Mr Baker, of Great Bookham, Surrey, who now runs his own television distribution company, is claiming damages from Dr Keye over an alleged breach of his duty of care to make a proper assessment of his health. The case continues.



Eileen McLardy and her husband Angus leaving the High Court in London last night

Stalking case student says tutor had affairs

By Richard Duce

A WOMAN accused of stalking her university lecturer accused him yesterday of having affairs with other students.

Eileen McLardy, 50, told the High Court in London that she believed she was acting for womankind in bringing a sexual harassment claim against Dr Robert Fine, a senior sociology lecturer at Warwick University.

Her claim was dismissed by university authorities last year. By then, the court was told, Mrs McLardy had launched a vendetta against Dr Fine, including repeatedly staring through the windows of his house in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. At first

Mrs McLardy repeatedly refused to answer questions from Judge Thompson, QC, about the exact nature of her harassment claim. Eventually she said: "He looked like he was going to jump me. I felt a distinct sexual advance was made at me."

Mrs McLardy, of Coventry, said that by making her complaint, she believed Dr Fine would stop the harassment. "It didn't seem to work. He was having affairs with other doctorates."

Dr Fine, 50, is seeking an injunction to prevent her molesting him at his home or at work, and is seeking damages. The case continues.



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Tory whisperers say Davies was moved by pique

BY ANDREW PIERCE

QUENTIN DAVIES, whose attack on the integrity of David Willetts in the cash-for-questions inquiry on Monday infuriated his Tory colleagues, was the subject of a backbench whispering campaign yesterday.

The Tory high command spread the word that Mr Davies, MP for Stamford and Spalding, had been inspired by pique at his failure to become a minister. It was a theory given credence by Mr Davies's wife, Chantal.

Mrs Davies suggested that her husband had expected to be travelling to Westminster in a ministerial limousine by now. "Of course he should be in the Government," she said. "It's crazy that he isn't. I have no idea why he has not made it. You had better ask the Prime Minister."

Sir Simon Benton-Jones, the MP's constituency president, concurred. "It is a sadness to us that his talents have not been recognised."

One theory being put around the Commons tea rooms yesterday was that Mr

Davies, an MP since 1987 and one of only two Tory rebels in the Commons vote on the Scott report in February, would be promoted to keep him quiet. Mrs Davies, who is also his Commons secretary, said: "I came up with that theory. He will have to wait and see what happens, but I don't think he has got a cat in hell's chance now."

Mr Davies was educated at Cambridge and Harvard and has been a merchant banker and diplomat. He is a One Nation Tory who believes in the restoration of village stocks and public floggings.

He had set his heart on a junior Treasury post in the 1994 reshuffle, and is thought to suspect Mr Willetts, a former Treasury whip, of thwarting his hopes of becoming an aide to the Chancellor last year, although Mrs Davies rejects that. However, it has been frustrating for him to see the likes of Mr Willetts, 40 and from the 1992 intake, knocking on the Cabinet door as he languishes on the back benches.



Second minister implicated in inquiry 'cover-up'

BY ANDREW PIERCE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A SECOND government minister was drawn last night into the controversy over allegations that the Tory leadership tried to suppress an investigation into the cash-for-questions affair.

During the second day of a hearing before the Privileges and Standards Committee, a Labour MP produced a leaked letter that he said proved that Andrew Mitchell, a former whip who is now a Social Security Minister, was implicated in the affair.

Dale Campbell-Savours said that the unsigned letter was from Mr Mitchell to the Tory Chief Whip and revealed a confidential conversation he had conducted with the clerk of the now defunct Members' Interests Committee, which was conducting the cash-for-questions inquiry at that time.

Mr Mitchell was in the highly unusual position of being a whip and a member of the committee, which was

usually the exclusive domain of backbenchers.

Mr Campbell-Savours said that the letter, which revealed the clerk's thoughts on whether the former Trade Minister Neil Hamilton should have declared a free stay at the Ritz Hotel, Paris, should have been for committee members only and not the Tory Whips' Office. The letter ended with the words: "Not very helpful I am afraid." The existence of the letter was further proof of a Tory whips' conspiracy, to undermine a quasi-judicial inquiry which was supposed to be above party politics.

Mr Campbell-Savours, MP for Workington, who was cross-examining David Willetts, the Paymaster General, over allegations he had also tried to smother the inquiry when he was a junior whip, said: "I put it to you that there was a deliberate, very effective effort made by the Whips' Office — and you were in the Whips' Office and Andrew Mitchell was in the Whips' Office — to try to influence this inquiry and to use the relationship between a member of that committee who was a whip and a clerk of the House of Commons to feed information to the Chief Whip and ultimately the Prime Minister."

Mr Willetts refused to speculate on the document, which he had not seen. He repeated his claim that he had not sought to influence the Members' Interests Committee's investigation into the Hamilton case. He insisted that Mr Mitchell, as he understood it, had always distinguished between his role as a whip and his role as a member of the committee. He refused to be

drawn on whether a whip should have been on the committee in the first place.

Mr Campbell-Savours said he thought Mr Willetts "may have been aware" of what was in the correspondence he had produced. In the letter, the committee clerk is reported as saying to Mr Mitchell in confidence that "in normal times" the committee would take a relaxed view of the Hamilton case.

Mr Campbell-Savours said to Mr Willetts: "You were in the Whips' Office — do you believe that that is the kind of letter that a whip should be sending to the Chief Whip when he is a member of that quasi-judicial committee?"

The allegations being examined by the Privileges and Standards Committee centre on a conversation that Mr Willetts had with Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, chairman of the original cash-for-questions inquiry in October 1994. Mr Willetts was accused on the first day by the Tory MP Quentin Davies of either falsifying and inventing his report of the conversation with Sir Geoffrey or his explanation of it in a memorandum to the committee. The Willetts note of the conversation set out two courses of action to the whips: put the Hamilton case on the back burner or carry it out rapidly by exploiting the Tory majority.

Tony Newton, the Leader of the House and committee chairman, ruled out further discussion of the Mitchell letter until it could be authenticated and the hearing ended after two hours. The committee will report its findings within a few weeks.

Tories set to lose Commons majority

BY PHILIP WEBSTER

THE Government's majority in the Commons is almost certain to be wiped out one month from tomorrow.

Labour officials disclosed last night that the by-election in Barnsley East, one of the two vacant seats, will be held on December 12. The safe Labour seat became vacant after sitting MP Terry Patchett died of cancer last month. He had a 24,777 majority at the last general election.

Yesterday Labour's by-election panel drew up a shortlist of possible candidates for the seat, including three Labour activists from Barnsley and one from London. They are Geoff Ems, leader of Barnsley Borough Council; Hedley Salt, former leader of the council; Anne Scarron, a local party activist; and Caroline Flint, a member of Chiswick Labour Party in London.

The panel also invited candidates for the other vacant seat, Wirral South. The party is looking for a new candidate after the resignation of Ian Wingfield over allegations of domestic violence from his former girlfriend, Carolyn Simpson. Dr Wingfield, 37, a councillor in Southwark, south London, has described the claims, which were reported in a national newspaper, as "untrue rumours".

The Wirral South seat became vacant after the death of the Tory MP Barry Forster, who had a majority of 8,183 at the last general election.

Redwood tells CBI of German conspiracy

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY

THE former Cabinet minister John Redwood accused Germany yesterday of trying to force Britain into joining "a country called Europe".

Mr Redwood told the Confederation of British Industry conference at Harrogate that Chancellor Helmut Kohl's "true reason" for wanting monetary union was to ensure political control of member states from Brussels.

His remarks were rejected by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, who also addressed the CBI. He made clear that Britain backed most of Chancellor Kohl's long-term aims for Europe, which he said were honourable.

Mr Redwood said that Chancellor Kohl was pressing towards an eventual goal of political union, using a single currency as the first stage. "He wants to build a country called Europe, governed from a city called Brussels with its economy directed from a bank in Frankfurt."

In a debate dominated by pro-European businessmen, Mr Redwood said that for most businesses the single currency would be "all cost and no benefits".

IN PARLIAMENT

TODAY in the Commons: from 9.30am, backbench debates; from 2.30pm, education and employment questions; Labour and Conservative debate on the 1996 crisis; backbench debate on land holding in Scotland; in the Lords: social security department committee; against: transport choice in education; Education (Special Educational Needs) Bill, second reading.

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Europe delighted to see Britain pulled into line



Flynn: he may introduce other social legislation

BRITAIN was accused yesterday of trying to hold new European Union treaty negotiations to ransom with its offensive against the 48-hour maximum working week. The European Commission said that John Major, who threatened to block further EU reforms if the ruling were not overturned, had little chance of reversing or winning exemption from the legislation.

Brussels officials and other member states were delighted by the European Court of Justice's decision to dismiss all of Britain's arguments in its appeal for the annulment of the 1993 working-time directive. As well as a maximum 48-hour week, it fixes a minimum of three weeks' paid holiday. "This is a good day for social Europe and a good day for those who believe that employees

should have the right to say 'no to excessive working hours,'" Padraig Flynn, the Social Affairs Commissioner, said.

The court's only concession to Britain was to annul a provision, inserted at Germany's request, that had set Sunday as a rest day "in principle". The directive, passed by member states under single-market legislation that requires only majority approval, must be enacted as law by November 23.

The decision set the scene for a fresh battle at the inter-governmental conference (IGC), the current negotiations for a revised Maastricht treaty, at which Britain is already resisting a drive by other states to extend majority voting and deepen integration. Within hours of the court decision Sir Stephen Wall, Britain's Ambassador to the EU and chief negotiator, tabled

proposals to the IGC to exempt Britain from the working-time directive and to make future health and safety legislation subject to unanimous voting among member states.

Mr Flynn welcomed the court's ruling that the EU was fully within its rights to legislate on working hours within a treaty article covering health and safety. The Luxembourg judges endorsed the EU argument that health and safety should be given a broad interpretation, covering the general well-being of workers. It rejected

Major's intention to fight for an exemption from the directive and a treaty change on workplace laws as a condition for British assent to a new EU treaty at the IGC. "Now they are threatening to hold the IGC to ransom," he said. He ridiculed the Government's argument that the EU had enacted social legislation "through the back door" rather than including it in the social chapter, from which Britain has an opt-out. "The UK failed to obtain what it wanted through the front door and then failed by the back door insofar as the court action is concerned, and now they are attempting to break in through the IGC," he said.

Sir Leon Brittan, the Commission Vice-President, and other officials said it was conceivable that Britain could win a special exemption in the horse-trading of the final

stages of the IGC next spring, but this could only come at the price of a British concession in some other field. "Until we can see the extent to which Britain is prepared to accommodate other people's interests, it's impossible to judge the success of Britain's own proposals on this issue or anything else," Sir Leon said.

There was palpable satisfaction around Europe that London had been hauled into line with its partners in a way that would rob it of some of the competitive edge enjoyed by British industry. Britain's relatively unregulated labour market is a source of widespread resentment and is often deemed to amount to what is known on the Continent as "social dumping".

Iain Duncan Smith, page 18
Leading article, page 19

Who will benefit and who won't: what the ruling says on hours, breaks, holidays and exemptions

Private firms must wait for ministers to pass new law

By James Landale, Political Reporter

SIX million public sector workers will be the first to benefit from the 48-hour week. European directives apply instantly to state employees. Britain's 15 million workers in the private sector will have to wait several months until the Government incorporates the working-time directive into British law - if indeed it does so.

From November 23, public workers and probably those working in newly privatised industries will have the right not to work for more than an average of 48 hours a week and will gain other rights. When the directive reaches the private sector it is likely to have greatest effect on small businesses employing a few staff working long hours.

Millions of workers are automatically exempt and the rest are free to work for more than 48 hours if they wish. Those who refuse an employ-

er's request to do so must not be "subjected to any detriment".

The six main provisions are:

- Maximum average of 48 hours a week, including overtime, over an initial four months that could be extended to six or 12 months if the Government, employers and unions agree. This flexibility would, for example, allow waiters to work longer hours through the summer. Four million people work more than 48 hours a week. The average working week is 43.7 hours.
- Minimum rest period of 11 consecutive hours in 24.
- Short break if working day is longer than six hours, length agreed between unions and employers or by law.
- Minimum of one rest day a week, not necessarily Sunday.
- Three weeks' annual leave, rising to four by 1999. Some 2.5 million people have



BUSINESS MANAGER

Anna Hawkins, 42, manages Safelight Multimedia Business Presentations, which employs 12 people and organises conference staging and audio-visuals. She is furious about the EU ruling and feels the business, owned by her brother, will be radically affected.

"When we organise a big conference our chaps can do 48 hours in three days, working right through the night. With these new rules they will be able to refuse, so either we will have to pay them hefty overtime, which we can't afford, or we will take to employing freelancers who will quote a set rate for getting the job done. The bottom line is that we cannot impose more charges on our clients and we will look for the cheapest option."

"It's crazy for the EU to dictate to us in this way, and I am urging John Major to revolt. Our business has to work in this erratic way. I frequently work from 9am to 9pm and I could tell my brother to stick it, but we all want to get the job done. This news isn't healthy for us or for British industry. There will be a lot of businesses shaking their heads today."

no paid leave and six million have fewer than four weeks.

- Night workers must not work more than an average eight hours in 24.
- Exemptions apply automatically to people working in air, rail, road, sea, inland waterway and lake transport; sea

fishing and other work at sea; and doctors in training. A second group of workers is restricted to the right of paid annual leave managing executives or others with autonomous decision-making powers: family workers; and people officiating at ceremonies in churches and religious communities.

RESTAURANT MANAGER

William Redwood manages a restaurant in southwest London. On average, he works a 60-hour week, which can increase when it is especially hectic, and earns £22,000 a year. He is exempt from the EU directives, but wishes he wasn't.

"In common with managers in most industries, I always work more than 48 hours in a week. Most of that is voluntary, on the basis that the job needs doing and won't go away if I don't deal with it. I don't have any choice, and I don't get paid overtime."

"It eats into your life, and it's got worse over the past few years, because there's a feeling that, if you won't do it, then plenty of others will step into your shoes. I am paid a salary, so working fewer hours wouldn't affect me financially, but it would improve my quality of life, which is more important. My salary isn't bad on paper, but when you break it down with the hours, it's not that great."



POLICE CIVILIAN

Carol Lyle is a communications officer for Greater Manchester Police, working in weekly shift patterns on the emergency switchboard. "We are trying to work out if the rulings include us, or if we are exempt because we work for the emergency services. I hope to God the rules do apply, because shiftwork like ours is a nightmare."

"We have a really ridiculous shift pattern called the Ottawa system, so-called because it originated in Canada. It effectively means 10-hour shift patterns which average out to 37.4 hours per week over a month, but in practice you can do 70 hours one week and 20 hours the next. It's ridiculous, particularly when you are doing nights, as it exhausts you and messes up your system. Effectively it ends up truncating your working life."

"I am salaried so it would be my quality of life that improved with restrictions on weekly working, but what price that? The guaranteed breaks are also welcome."

SECURITY GUARD

After 15 years of 100-hour weeks, Richie Owen decided enough was enough and left his job as a security guard in Newcastle upon Tyne, although only after his marriage and health had failed under the pressure. Mr Owen, 38, decided to quit when he clocked off at the end of one week and saw that he had been going for 101 hours and 45 minutes.

"I was working days and nights and my sleeping patterns were destroyed," he said. "I had one day off a week and then I had to catch up on sleep and I was too tired to take my children out. My ex-wife had to look after the kids seven days a week and my marriage collapsed. I was too tired to even argue. I will probably be on medication for the rest of my life because of a stomach complaint I got from my eating habits."

Despite many promotions, he was earning £3.79 an hour when he left. He is now working for another security firm which pays enough for him to work a 40-hour week. He fears that the directive is not in itself a solution. "You would need a minimum wage, because the £1.70-an-hour person needs to do 100 hours to earn a half-decent wage."

Why long days are not always stressful for British workers

THE WORN faces of City workers who return home after a 12-hour day, or longer, have tugged at the heartstrings of our legislators in Brussels. The European Union, with our health in mind, has resorted to health and safety regulations to persuade employers that their employees will suffer if Britain continues to work such long hours.

Those who talk about the stress of long working hours are very often confusing two similar concepts, stress and anxiety. There is a difference. Anxiety is one of the causes of stress, and an overlong working day is one of the factors which can precipitate anxiety. It is not work which is necessarily stressful, but the

worker's reaction to it. Someone who really loves their job would not find working long hours taxing, as long as it did not cause domestic strife. Anything which causes anxiety is damaging to the health, and anxiety at work from whatever cause leads to stress. The pity is that modern firms sometimes deliberately engender anxiety. Producing some uncertainty at work may improve performance in the short term, but in the long term the anxiety it causes will precipitate stress, damaging health, reducing efficiency and taking away any pleasure in the job which would have made the long hours bear-

able. Stress induced by the anxiety and unpredictability of life in modern industry has a bad effect on the cardiovascular system in general, and on blood pressure in particular. It ruins the digestion, causes impotence, frigidity, and headaches. The long-term effect of these reactions to stress is to render the employee liable to heart attacks and strokes. It will also affect the immune system, and in consequence will increase the likelihood of malignancies and infections.

DR THOMAS STUTTFORD

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Hours cut seen as recipe to boost profits in Germany

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

HELMUT K, a 66-year-old Rhineland who refuses to claim a pension, started work at 7am yesterday and, fuelled by numerous lunch breaks and a seven-minute telephone call to Boris Yeltsin, was busy deep into the evening.

A typical day for Chancellor Kohl but not for German workers, who showed themselves bemused at British resistance to the European work-time directive.

"The British Government wants to fight for the right of bosses to order people to work for 48 hours," asked a dazed official of the metalworkers' union, Herr Reinhold Felber. "I thought the Conservatives were trying to stay in power."

The upholding by the European Court of Justice of the European Union directive, which Britain had argued did not apply to it under its negotiated opt-out, "strengthens the rights of British workers and stops countries from

undercutting others with looser labour regulation," said Heidmarie Wiczorek-Zeul, a Social Democrat European expert.

"Once it wins the next election, the Labour Party will apply the Social Charter and assure more social security for British workers."

The main point of the European Court of Justice decision, she said, was that "it makes clear that Britain cannot play a special role in this question".

Employers and unionists yesterday agreed the issue of working hours was a strange battlefield for the British Government. Even hotel-owners — who may put receptionists on an early shift after they have worked at night — did not feel upset by the directive; those concerned get compensating time off and often prefer back-to-back shifts.

The focus of discussions about making Germany more competitive is on shortening,

rather than extending, working hours. Volkswagen workers agreed to a four-day, 29-hour week and smaller wages rather than accept 30,000 redundancies. Working time has to be apportioned more flexibly — including some weekends or late evenings — but the car workers seem willing to put up with that.

The modernisation and rejuvenation of the German steel industry hinges on a scheme that allows workers aged 54 or over to put in shorter weeks, their wage shortfall being made up by both Government and the employers until they retire at 65. That is cheaper than making them redundant and allows companies to hire younger workers.

New shopping hours, introduced on November 1, allow shops to open until 8pm on weekdays, and on Saturday afternoons. Greeted with initial suspicion, it is slowly



Volkswagen workers, seen here at the main Wolfsburg plant, agreed to a shorter working week and cut in wages rather than accept 30,000 redundancies

being accepted as a job-stimulating measure — part-time workers are being hired — and as a source of overtime as well as a way of increasing consumer spending.

The unions have been aiming for years for a 35-hour average week and in the engineering and electronic industries this is a reality, though workers have had to agree to inconvenient shifts.

Overtime remains unpopular, the average for manufacturing industry being 2.1 hours a week.

The bargaining power of German trade unions goes some way towards explaining how the goal of a shorter working week has been maintained over three decades. Originally, the unions saw it as a natural progression towards a "leisure society".

Now it is viewed as a way of saving jobs. The Government is not sure, divided between those wanting more de-regulation to compete more effectively with Asian manufacturers, and those who believe a shorter week can increase flexibility and productivity.

Failure of opt-out, page 18
Leading article, page 19

Unofficial fiestas shrink Spain's week

FROM TUNEE VARADARAJAN IN MADRID

UNDER Spanish labour laws, employees work a maximum of 40 hours a week. Additionally, the law insists that there should be a minimum 12-hour gap between the end of one working day and the start of the next.

Spain's workers enjoy 30 days of paid vacations and 14 additional fully-paid days off for public holidays or fiestas. Then there are the "days off" taken between or around important public holidays, which are called, colloquially, *superpuentes*, or *superbridges*. According to the authoritative 1996 *Central Hispano Handbook*, these days off cost employers about £920 million a year.

In spite of this, Spain remains relatively competitive because of its low wages and weak currency. It also has the worst record of compliance with EU regulations, applying fewer than half of the compulsory EU health and safety rules.

Labour laws in neighbouring Portugal are more rigorous. The Portuguese work a maximum of 48 hours a week. Figures published recently by the Union Bank of Switzerland reveal that employees in the city of Lisbon work more hours a year than those of any other EU capital, including London.

The Portuguese are entitled to 22 days of paid leave a year, although fiestas tend to bump the total up to about 30.

Average weekly hours:	
UK	43.9
Portugal	41.2
Spain	40.7
Greece	40.3
Ireland	40.2
Sweden	40
France	39.9
Germany	39.7
Austria	39.6
Luxembourg	39.5
Netherlands	39.5
Denmark	38.9
Finland	38.6
Italy	38.4
Belgium	38.4

Source: European Commission

EUROPEAN HOLIDAYS

Legal days a year paid holiday	
France	30
Spain	30
Denmark	30
Sweden	27
Austria	25
Luxembourg	25
Finland	24
Germany	24
Greece	24
Portugal	22
Belgium	20
Netherlands	20
Ireland	15
Italy	0*
UK	0*

Source: European Commission

France imposes limits

Paris: In France the average working week is 39 hours (Susan Bell writes). In line with other European countries French employees are not allowed to work more than 48 hours a week. The maximum length of the working day is ten hours, and a 24-hour rest period is compulsory during each working week.

Employees are entitled to five weeks' annual paid holiday. In addition employees benefit from 11 public holidays a year. Employers may also

give their staff up to six extra days off a year.

As part of an initiative to cut unemployment, the Government introduced a law in June designed to reduce the working week. Under this law employers can, with union agreement, decrease the hours worked by employees by a minimum of 10 per cent, thereby benefiting from a 40 per cent reduction in social charges. The measure is designed to avoid lay-offs and boost staffing levels.

EU states attacked for misusing £3bn of taxpayers' cash

FROM LEYLA LINTON IN STRASBOURG

THE European Union's financial watchdog yesterday attacked European Governments for mismanaging at least £3 billion of taxpayer's money. Almost 6 per cent of all payments from the 1995 EU budget was subject to "substantial material errors", Bernhard Friedmann, the president of the Court of Auditors, announced in a presentation of his annual report to the European Parliament.

"The present system for implementing the budget of the European Social Fund (ESF), requires fundamental revision and the fact that the Commission is failing to take clear steps in this direction is no longer acceptable," Professor Friedmann said.

Much of the £22 billion spent between 1990 and 1995 to tackle unemployment had had little success. "The Commission must, at all costs, continue to improve assessment. In particular, structural aid should be used more for the creation of jobs," the report said.

Several agencies responsible for controlling the ESF did not keep complete accounts, the report said. "This was found to be the case in audits in Greece, Spain, Italy, France, Portugal and the United Kingdom," it said.

Professor Friedmann also

criticised the way in which social aid was spread too thinly with development criteria affecting about half the population of EU countries.

The auditors also found that while payment appropriations amounted to almost 24 billion ecu (£18.7 billion), actual payment only came to 19.5 billion ecu. Ironically, about 10 per cent of the 16.5 million ecu given to member states in 1994 and 1995 for detecting fraud was not adequately accounted for, according to the report.

Professor Friedmann said that fraud was not always behind the anomalies and only accounted for about 1.2 per cent of the EU budget.

Ekki Lilkanen, the Budget Commissioner, said the Commission accepted that errors in payment were too high and proposed to introduce clear rules on eligibility for funds.

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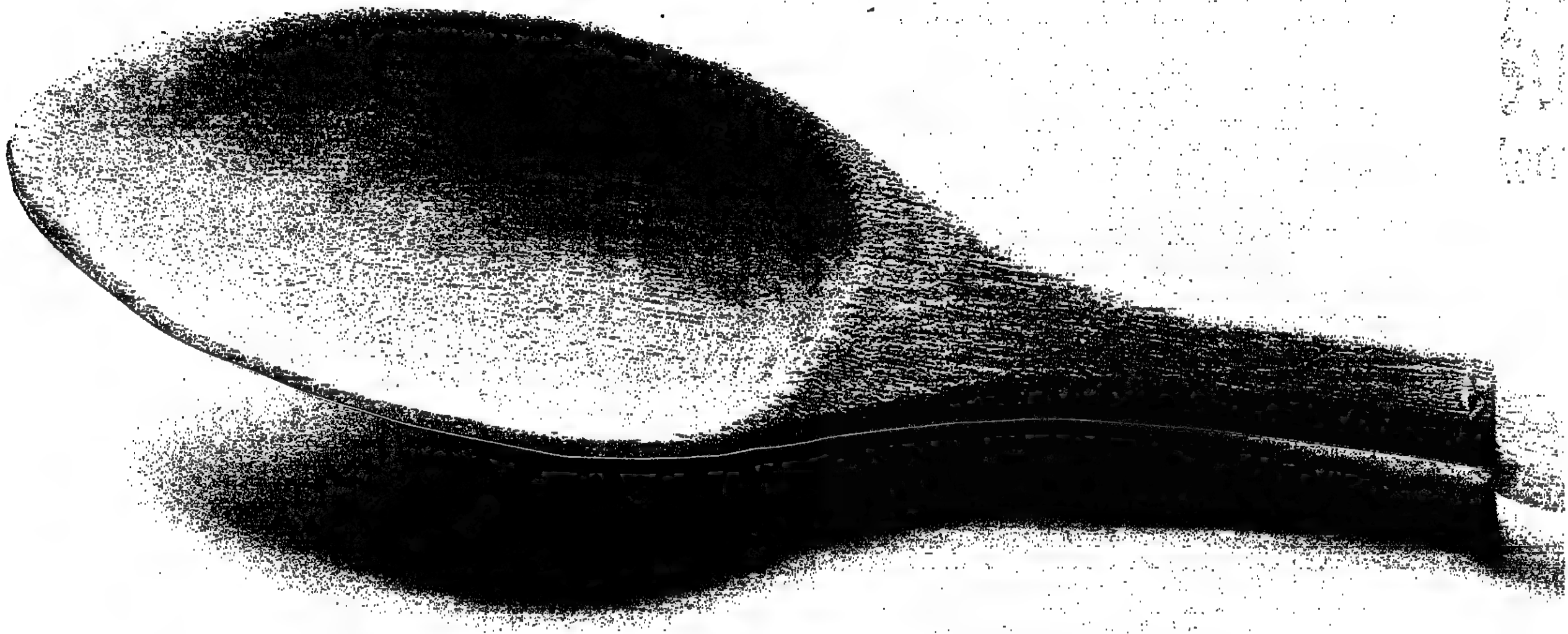
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Taleban's rough justice wins approval from crime-plagued Kabul citizens

FROM ANTHONY LOYD
IN KABUL

TIED to a lamppost with wire and rags, whipped, bloody and beaten, the Kabul thief has only a short time before his right hand is severed.

His face is covered in black oil and blood and, to add to his humiliation, his Taleban captors have strung a pair of boots and a watering can around his neck. Near valueless Afghan rupees have been stuffed into his shirt collar where they emerge from the

fallen locks of his badly shorn hair like obscene petals. A small knife, which he apparently used to pick a doorlock, hangs among the medley of items.

Turbaned figures swirl around him whipping him with riding crops and cable flex as a jeering crowd of about a hundred people presses around him in a semi-circle. "I am a thief," the Taleban make him call out pathetically to the onlookers between thrashings. "Do not steal like me or your punishment will be even worse."

The Taleban are getting tough

on crime in the Afghan capital and their radical interpretation of Sharia (Islamic law) is one of seemingly rough and ready justice. However, the citizens of the city, used to years of lawlessness and criminal abuse, appear to have welcomed the Taleban's stand on law and the new security it offers for their lives.

"It is a good thing they do to this man," said a young student in the crowd. "We are sick of thieving and robbery here. Public spectacles like this mean we can rest at night and know we are safe."

While the Taleban fighters suddenly turn to beat back the pressing mass of people with rifle butts, a dwarf, withered with age, is allowed to step forward and abuse the thief. Yet the hapless crook, Kadam Ali, is aware his ordeal has only just begun. "I am guilty," he whispers to me. "I have stolen 950,000 rupees and more, and I have confessed."

Among the first of the city's thieves to be dealt with in this way by the new occupiers of Kabul, his public beating is only a preliminary to his punishment. Caught a

few days ago with a haul of copper pots and pans, an axe, cooking oil, rice, money, Persian plates and quilts during his third trip to raid a merchant's empty house, Kadam was detained and questioned. He now faces three court appearances before Taleban holymen punish him with the amputation of his right hand.

"Each court is presided over by three mullahs who are judges," explained Maulawi Ghulam Hassan, a senior Taleban figure from the Justice Department. "The first court decision is to comment on

the case and sentence. The mullahs must be in agreement. Under Sharia it is written that if the thief has stolen goods beyond a certain value, he shall have his hand amputated after a third court session which issues and confirms the verdict. Here the thief has confessed so it is a simple matter."

After the verdict the Taleban advertise the coming punishment on the radio, and the thief is taken to a public place. A doctor gives him a local anaesthetic, cuts off his hand, bandages the stump, and lets him go. Under the most

simple interpretation of the Sharia there are four possible punishments: the amputation of limbs for theft, beating by whips or imprisonment for minor offences, and execution for murder.

□ Sabotage claim: An armoured vehicle blew up outside the house of Mullah Muhammad Hassan, deputy leader of the ruling Taleban council in Kabul early yesterday. People working in the area claimed a limpet mine caused the explosion. Sabotage was a popular weapon of the Afghan Mujahidin. (Reuters)

Canada offers to lead humanitarian force for Zaire

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME AND JAMES BONE NEW YORK

CANADA has volunteered to lead a multinational force to help to save hundreds of thousands of refugees uprooted by fighting in eastern Zaire. Boutros Boutros Ghali, the United Nations Secretary-General, said yesterday at the World Food Summit in Rome that he had spoken to Jean Chrétien, Canada's Prime Minister, on Monday.

Dr Boutros Ghali said Canada, which he described as a "very neutral" country "has accepted to command these multinational forces". The UN Secretary-General said the size of the force had yet to be decided but that it was likely to involve 10,000-12,000 troops. France, Spain, Italy and South Africa have offered to provide troops and America is considering providing logistical support. Diplomats said this would include transport aircraft and satellite intelligence. The cost of the operation would be borne by the participating countries.

Dr Boutros Ghali had also spoken to President Mandela about South African participation, and would have further talks with Thabo Mbeki, the Deputy President, who is attending the Rome summit. "I hope that in the next few days we will be able to have these multinational forces, and a mandate for them from the Security Council," the Secretary-General said.

Canada's offer should enable the international com-

munity to field a neutral force, not dependent on France, which is viewed with suspicion by the Rwandan Government. France once supported the Hutu-led Government which conducted the 1994 genocide of the Tutsi minority in Rwanda and then fled across the border to Zaire with more than a million refugees.

Canada's offer to lead a multinational force reflects its desire to restore its credibility in Africa after white supremacists in an elite military unit, which had been sent on a peacekeeping mission to Somalia, beat a local man to death for stealing a pair of sunglasses.

Raymond Chrétien, Canada's Ambassador in Washington and the nephew of the Prime Minister, was recently appointed special UN envoy to solve the refugee crisis in Zaire and is currently touring the region.

Diplomats at UN headquar-

Fourth refugee helper is killed

Madrid: A fourth Spanish missionary has been presumed murdered in the Bukavu area of Zaire where he was helping refugees, the Foreign Ministry said here. It urged 39 Spanish missionaries still working in the area to return to Spain. (AP)

ters said discussions were continuing about the precise role of an intervention force. Still undecided is whether the force will facilitate the delivery of aid to refugees by setting up secure "humanitarian corridors" into eastern Zaire from the Rwandan border or whether it will simply escort individual aid convoys. Debate is also continuing about the extent to which the multinational force will try to repatriate the refugees to Rwanda and Burundi.

The multinational force is likely to be replaced in several months' time by a smaller UN unit in charge of supervising the return of the refugees to their homes. The United States has backed the principle of multinational military intervention, but was still discussing the form it should take. An American official said an announcement was expected today. Canadian officials have told other Governments that Washington is "content" for Canada to lead the multinational effort.

□ Kinshasa: Faustin Birindwa, Zaire's former Prime Minister, has arrived in Kinshasa, the capital, after fleeing into the bush when rebels seized his eastern hometown of Bukavu two weeks ago. Mr Birindwa walked more than 60 miles over rugged mountain terrain to reach a village from where he left on a small aircraft flown by his son. (Reuters)



A rider of a wooden bicycle passes the wreckage of a Zairean armoured personnel carrier in Goma yesterday

Voodoo terror haunts fleeing Tutsis

FROM SAM KILEY
IN GOMA

CLINGING to a pair of banana poles, Chroni Munyangabe paddled for his life across Lake Kivu. A Tutsi farmer, he did not flee Hutu militiamen, nor east Zaire's rebel advance, but the Mai Mai, naked voodoo warriors who have emerged as a frightening new ingredient for chaos in the Great Lakes cauldron.

Weak with hunger from hiding in banana plantations while the Mai Mai slaughtered Tutsis in his village, including his uncle, Mr Chroni, 45, swam 15 miles across the lake to safety in the rebel-held port of Goma.

"I didn't know much about the Mai Mai. They just came out of the forest, naked, and started shooting. They said they were going to hunt down all the Tutsis," he said, pointing at the bamboo

stalks that had saved his life on his marathon swim. Little is known about the Mai Mai, other than rumours that they practise cannibalism and believe that their magic is so strong that bullets turn to water when they hit their skin. "I didn't see them eat anyone. But I heard that they did," Mr Chroni said.

Mainly members of the Hunde tribe, they have fought for and against almost every other group: they have taken on Tutsi rebels, Rwandan Hutu extremist militia and the Zairean Army, apparently driven by little else but blood-lust.

The ordeal in the Great Lakes widened as it emerged that cholera had struck a Rwandan Hutu refugee camp in South Kivu, putting the lives of the 250,000 people in Mwenga, 120 miles west of Bukavu, the regional capital, at risk. Another 500,000 Hutu refugees, trapped by their own leaders in Mugunga camp

ten miles west of Goma, are also threatened with starvation and disease as their clean water supplies have broken down and rebels have surrounded the camp.

Last night the UN High Commissioner for Refugees announced that it was ready to start an airlift of aid to Rwanda's Hutu refugees who have scattered around eastern Zaire. Ruth Marshall, for the agency, said it would soon try to fly supplies from Zaire's capital, Kinshasa, to Kisangani, 350 miles west of Goma.

The move comes after Kinshasa's insistence that aid should only be channelled through areas under its control. Kinshasa's insistence is a nightmare for the UN, which has been struggling to drive over appalling roads to Mugunga camp, a 20-minute drive down Tazara, through the rebel area to the border with Rwanda, and an hour to Uganda.

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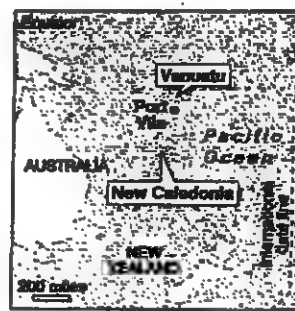
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Vanuatu soldiers arrested in raid after revolt over pay

FROM ROGER MAYNARD
IN SYDNEY

NEARLY half of Vanuatu's fractious paramilitary defence force was arrested yesterday in a pre-dawn operation ordered by the new leaders of the Pacific island chain.

The arrest of 138 officers and men out of a complement of 300 followed rising tension over the state's failure to pay its soldiers more than \$1 million (£600,000) in allowances. Last month the Vanuatu Mobile Force became so incensed over the matter that soldiers kidnapped President Jean Marie Leye and took him to an outer island to put their case to



Barak Sope, the acting Prime Minister. After an emergency Cabinet meeting lasting several hours, the Government agreed to pay up and the President was allowed to go home. Although the mutinous forces were granted an amnes-

ty, the Government, headed by the recently-elected Serge Vohor as Prime Minister, was clearly disturbed by their action. Yesterday Mr Vohor decided to strike back, handing law and order to the police and devising a plan to call on foreign forces to keep the peace if necessary.

Broadcasting live to Vanuatu from Australia, where he had stopped on his way to Rome, Mr Vohor said: "Law and order are now in the hands of the police."

Speaking from Vanuatu's capital, Port-Vila, Walter Lini, the Justice Minister, said the men, who had offered no resistance, would face court action.

India fishermen survive cyclone

Hyderabad: About 315 fishermen, who had been feared dead after a cyclone devastated the southeast Indian coast last week, safely reached the shore yesterday, a relief official said in Hyderabad.

However, more than 980 fishermen are still missing. (Reuters)

Liz Taylor must pay legal costs

Los Angeles: The National Enquirer crowed over a judge's ruling that Elizabeth Taylor and Larry Fortensky, her latest former husband, must pay the £263,800 costs of a failed court fight in which they had claimed an article invaded their privacy. (AP)

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Lawsuit rekindles doubts over death of Clinton aide

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE most compelling mystery of the Clinton Administration returned to haunt the White House yesterday when a key witness in the death of Vincent Foster, the presidential aide and confidant, sued the American Government and two FBI agents he accused of harassment and falsifying his evidence.

Patrick Knowlton, 41, a construction consultant, claimed the FBI had tampered with his testimony after he arrived at Fort Marcy, Park outside Washington, on July 20, 1993, more than an hour before the body of the deputy White House counsel was officially discovered in nearby bushes.

The day after he was later subpoenaed to appear as a grand jury witness, Mr Knowlton said he became subject to sustained intimidation by a surveillance network of at least 25 men, whom he claims tried to prevent him from telling his story.

Yesterday, outside the US district court in Washington, he released details of a \$1.5 million (£930,000) suit filed against the US Government and the FBI which had been sealed until after the presidential election.

"I want the truth behind why my reports were falsified by the FBI and why people were harassing me," he said. "I have no idea how Vince Foster's life ended. All I do

know is that all the information does not quite add up."

Caught in traffic while returning home from a job in Maryland, Mr Knowlton had stopped at the park to relieve himself before driving home to Washington. He parked beside a brown Honda Accord with Arkansas plates and close to the only other car in the area, a blue-grey sedan.

According to his testimony, a Middle Eastern or Hispanic looking man in the sedan gave Mr Knowlton a threatening look as if he was guarding the park entrance.

When Mr Knowlton telephoned the park police on hearing of Foster's death the next day, they took only a brief statement and even spelled his name wrongly. Nine months later, he was interviewed by



Foster: White House says he committed suicide

Lawrence Monroe, an FBI agent, whom he claims went to extraordinary lengths to persuade Mr Knowlton that the Honda he had seen was not merely blue, but a later model similar to that driven by Mr Foster. Mr Monroe and Russel Bransford, another federal agent, are named in the suit, which will be handed to Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, at the end of the week.

Mr Knowlton claims a series of other alterations were made to his testimony and when finally he was called before the grand jury, a form of harassment employed by covert psychological operation units was used against him.

"I feared for my life," he said. "These men followed me everywhere and gave me threatening stares wherever I walked."

The case comes under the remit of Kenneth Starr, the independent counsel on Whitewater, who said this week that his investigation had been hampered by a lack of co-operation from people with relevant information.

The death of Foster, one of the Clintons' closest friends from Arkansas, is still the most potent puzzle of this Administration. The White House consistently has said he committed suicide, but testimony from those such as Mr Knowlton has continued to leave a question mark hanging over the case.



The 67 Gurkha Independent Field Squadron at its Hong Kong disbandment parade in September

Loyal Gurkhas feel let down as families are left behind in Nepal

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

"THE Gurkhas are extremely loyal even when they are being treated badly. They won't grumble and perhaps that is a part of the problem," says Stephen Hawgood, the manager of one of the Hong Kong security companies that employs demobbed Gurkhas, now seen around town wearing red berets and guarding valuable things and important people.

However, the Gurkhas can make a point about loyalty as a two-way street. Krishna Bahadur Ale, a former captain in the Queen's Gurkhas, spent 14 years of his 24 years in the service in Hong Kong. Now a security officer, he remembers the Chinese Army firing across the border during the Cultural Revolution and seizing his commanding officer and dragging him away. "One of the lads took out his kukri [the Gurkha dagger], went in, and brought him back."

Now Mr Krishna faces being sent back to Nepal, with 800 other Gurkha veterans, because of Hong Kong's tightening laws on imported labour. "Hong Kong is my second home. Maybe we are owed something by Hong Kong. Maybe not," he says. He may as well have said Britain.

There have been Gurkhas in the British Army for almost 180 years and they have been posted in Hong Kong for 48 of them. As the garrison here winds down, in which at one time there were 7,500 Gurkhas, most soldiers and their families are leaving the Army. Many have been flown home but a few hundred will join The Parachute Regiment in Britain. 750 more will bolster the Royal Signals, Transport and Engineers.

Here lies the core of the family problem. Under the 1947 tripartite agreement between Britain, India and Ne-

pal, Gurkhas in the British Army can be accompanied by their families overseas only to Hong Kong and Brunei, unlike all other British soldiers who, except on short tours such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, take their families with them.

Gurkhas based in Britain knew that when they were sent to Hong Kong or Brunei their families would join them. Now only those posted to the Parachute Regiment have this hope; those posted to Brunei will be in the Royal Gurkha Rifles, a combat outfit.

For those in the Gurkha Signals, Transport or Engineers there can never again be an "accompanied" posting because Hong Kong is no longer available. Thus their families will remain in Nepal, one of the world's poorest countries. Its wretched schools mean their children will no longer have some of their education in service schools nor will

their families be looked after by British Army doctors.

By contrast, there are tens of thousands of Gurkhas in the Indian Army who, when their enlistments are finished, can settle in India with their families.

A Hong Kong source close to the Army said yesterday: "It's garbage about the tripartite agreement. It could be changed. But the Ministry of Defence is terrified of British racists who don't want a lot of black women giving birth in England to black babies who will then be British automatically. It's as simple as that."

This dispute seems a long way from November 8, 1994, when the last 153 Gurkhas trained in Hong Kong's Malaya Lines took part in the colony's final passing out parade.

Simon Jenkins, page 18
Leading article, page 19

Nepalese leader pleads for pensions

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR
AND MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Nepalese Prime Minister, Sher Bahadur Deuba, yesterday asked John Major for a pledge that Britain would allow the Gurkhas to bring their families with them when they move to Britain from Hong Kong.

He also asked Britain to pay Gurkhas the same army pensions as British soldiers. At present they receive only about one eighth of the pension of British soldiers.

Britain is to retain 3,000 Gurkhas in the Army, and over the next six months 2,000 will come to Britain from Hong Kong, where they currently form the main British garrison.

The Ministry of Defence which is carrying out a review of the Gurkhas' pay and conditions, is expected to offer married quarters accommodation for those who are to be based at Folkestone.

The expected decision follows criticism by Field Marshal Sir Nigel Bagnall, a former Chief of the General Staff, supported by MPs, after it emerged that the Gurkhas relocated in Britain from Hong Kong would not be allowed to bring their families.

Britain is unlikely to accede to Mr Deuba's request for equal pensions, however. The Gurkhas' conditions of service are governed by a 1947 tripartite agreement between Britain, Nepal and India. The Ministry of Defence pointed out that the Gurkhas' pensions go a long way in Nepal.

Mr Deuba, the first Nepalese Prime Minister to pay an official visit to Britain for 88 years, said that many of the Gurkhas who resettled in Nepal faced hardship. He called for more British welfare provision. In the Second World War, about 250,000 Gurkhas fought alongside British and Commonwealth forces. In the two world wars, there were more than 43,000 Gurkha casualties.

Arms cache found under New York

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

A MAZE of tunnels and underground "dungeons" containing rifles, machine-guns and explosives was found in a residential district of New York.

Police said the treasure found in Brooklyn's Crown Heights area could indicate the presence of an urban militia which may have been using three adjoining houses as a bomb factory. The four-storey brownstone houses have been occupied for 15 years by an offshoot of the 1960s radical group, the Weathermen, which was founded with the aim of conducting a "people's war" against the American Government.

More than 65 handguns, rifles and submachine-guns were found in the warren after a tip-off, together with a cache of ammunition which had been concealed in the back of a wardrobe. Thirty arrests were made after several people darted out of the building and numerous packages were taken away for forensic examination.

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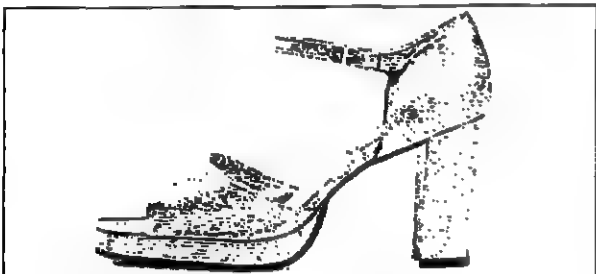
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Plum mock-croc high heel, £125, Russell & Bromley



Style Editor Grace Bradberry says this season's fashions won't work without high heels unless you want to look like a frump

Tripping round town in a pair of ultra-high stilettos is the sort of thing that models get up to. We expect it of them. And we'd never dream of doing anything so silly ourselves. But this winter many of us could find ourselves trying to emulate the high-heeled acrobatics of Shalom Harlow and her ilk. It's either that or look like frumps.

The season's simple, minimalist styles just won't work without heels. On-the-knee skirts, boot-cut trousers, slip-dresses, bias-cut evening wear – they all need that bit of extra lift.

Exactly which shape of heel is not the issue. Wooden stacks have a cult fashion following, as do Mary Janes. Stilettos remain popular. But it's really the height that counts – and we're talking very high indeed.

If you think you can pass on this particular trend, then think again. Vertiginous footwear really will transform many of the best looks, a fact brought home to me in Joseph recently, when the assistant slipped a pair of Prada shoes into the changing room.

It was a shrewd sales tactic. With the addition of heels, a pair of tweed trousers that had looked frumpy and unflattering suddenly had an elongating effect on the legs. A skirt that had looked ordinary and oddly proportioned came into its own as a quirky, stretchy little number.

The only problem was that I just couldn't walk in the shoes. Even standing stock-still in the changing room they were a challenge. So I didn't buy them (the £210 price tag was another turn-off), but I did buy the clothes, and that meant finding a pair of comfortable stacks elsewhere.

Now I don't wish to heap the blame on Russell & Bromley (where I eventually bought a pair of brown mock-croc stacks). Their enormous wooden heels are doubtless as wearable as those of any other high street store. But that's not saying much. For the first month, at any rate, they were agony.

Staggering down the street, a blister rapidly forming on one heel. I found it hard to believe that a less practical pair of shoes had ever

existed. Eventually, I learnt to clump the whole foot down at once and things improved. Even now, however, fleet-footed agility is out.

But according to Angela Dunn, a catwalk model for the past ten years, my shoes are for wimps. "Stilettos are far worse than stack heels," she says. "But to be honest, 99 per cent of the time, the shoes I'm given to wear are uncomfortable."

Her tip for walking in thick high heels is to put the whole of the foot down at once: "In stacks, you can't put your heel down first because the arch of your foot can't bend as you take a step forward. It sounds silly, but you really do have to practise."

Even so, accidents will happen. "If you're on the catwalk and you're running or losing your balance, then you clench the knee muscles and the back muscles," says Angela. "But obviously that's not something you'd want to try too often..."

Manolo Blahnik, the high society shoe designer, has another suggestion: buy shoes that are properly constructed. "I saw a very important American editor recently, and she was wearing huge constructivist heels. She was in pain," he says. "It doesn't matter how high the shoe is, the important thing is that the balance of the body has to be in the central point. There's no secret about it – it simply has to be beautifully done by the best technicians." A clutch of whom are, of course, in his employ.

Even so, he has steered clear of the clumpiest stacks. "I do have a stack heel, but it's thinner, not a reproduction of the Seventies. Really, stack heels are for the children."

Armando Pollini, the Italian designer, is also adamant that technical wizardry can create high but comfortable shoes "by a meticulously accurate attention to shape and the use of technically advanced materials". But if the bank balance won't run to designer shoes, then you may want to heed George Bernard Shaw's advice: "If you rebel against high-heeled shoes, take care to do so in a very smart hat." Animal print clothes are just the thing this season...

Photographs by DES JENSON



Shalom Harlow tripping down the street in the season's high heels, accompanied by Martine Le Blanc

The only problem was I just could not walk in the shoes

Small clothes, big looks

Child-woman, mutton-dressed-as-lamb, jail bait – there are any number of distasteful expressions for females who do not dress their age. While gender-bending has become an acceptable fashion statement for women, its chronological equivalent remains taboo.

And quite right, too, you might think. Many of us feel distinctly queasy when we hear that the schoolgirl look is big – as it is again this year – or when we see pictures of 12-year-old girls dressed up to look 21. Paula Yates's appearance in an undersized Little Miss Trouble T-shirt did nothing to make the concept more palatable.

Of course, there are exceptions. Camilla Nickerson, fashion editor of American Vogue, looks minimalist and chic in her expert school uniform buys. And legions of elegant thirtysomething women have tasteful basics bearing the legend "age 12".

One of the season's best fashion tips is to nip along to the school uniform departments, where boys' grey V-neck sweaters can look strikingly like the ones in this winter's Prada collection – the V is higher and shallower than on the conventional Benetton version.

Children's departments offer clothes by leading designers at a fraction of the adult price

But on the whole, people keep quiet about their forays into the children's department. Those who dare to cross the invisible barrier are, however, stealing a march on the rest of us.

They are the ones whose jumpers are neatly cropped at the hip-bone, so they accentuate the positive and don't bulk out under jackets. And they are the ones whose polo and skinny-rib jumpers cost less than £20, leaving them with cash to spare on more exciting clothes.

The fact is that for some time now leading designers have been creating oversized looks for women. Many of the more expensive labels produce teenage and adult collections that are strikingly similar, but with very different price tags.

This is partly because you will not be paying VAT, and partly because designers can-

not get away with charging 13-year-olds the same prices they would charge women.

And the sizes are not as small as you'd think. A size 14 sweater from GapKids, for example, will easily fit a size 12 woman.

The only thing to watch out for is the arm length – although given that skimpy-skinny looks are the height of chic, a little too much wrist can be a good thing. Failing that, opt for sleeveless jackets and tank tops. It is also worth investigating boys' ranges – Ralph Lauren and Paul Smith are particularly good for jumpers. Other names to look for include Jigsaw, which has just launched a unisex children's range, and Naf Naf. Benetton 012 is one of the best-kept fashion secrets.

Paul Smith are particularly good for jumpers. Other names to look for include Jigsaw, which has just launched a unisex children's range, and Naf Naf. Benetton 012 is one of the best-kept fashion secrets.

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Astrology and the need to believe

Why are we going to New Age cranks for old-style cures?

Being right is not necessarily a consolation. A Church of England report out this week quite accurately describes the cult of the clairvoyant and star signs as "the new religion", and it's the fact that it's correct which is so damning.

But that is simply how it is now, you could argue: one irrational body of beliefs takes over from another. Consider this just a spiritual evolution — or fashion if you wish.

Still, the Church is justifiably peeved: 12 per cent of the population go to Church, but several times that number read their horoscopes. Since the same poll that found the percentage of churchgoers also revealed that more than two thirds of those questioned think of themselves as essentially religious (and believing in God), it becomes obvious that the spiritual slack is being taken up elsewhere.

It is manifestly true, however, that humans seem to have a basic need for a certain amount of mumbo-jumbo, and if we don't find that need met in one place then we will look for it elsewhere.

What must really galled the clergy is the whine (reproduced in this report in the form of a fictional green ink letter) that "the Church is years out of date" when what has taken over from it is a body of ancient superstitions, all runes and ley lines, that would make a coven of medieval witches look like a rigorously academic meeting of scientific minds.

The Bishop of Rochester, the Right Rev Dr Michael Nazir-Ali, who has chaired the group which has written *The Search for Faith & Witness for the Church*, correctly identifies a fundamental change in the way we live. If people no longer go to Church (despite professing a belief in God), then the apparent contradiction inherent in this fact must be analysed.

The obvious implication, before we even start investigating further, may simply be (as all normal people know) that when people are questioned they don't tell the truth. More specifically, it is strange how many people, who are to all intents and purposes unbelievers, are suddenly nervous about the idea of answering "no" to the question "Do you believe in God?"

A mixture of egomania (even if we doubt God's existence we need to feel he doesn't doubt ours) and superstition makes the interviewees feel spooked at the prospect of the God he doesn't really believe in striking him with a thunderbolt. So he's hedged: no to church but yes to God.

The bishop prefers to blame the "privatisation" of society, by which he means the way we increasingly live our lives at home, alone. He's right: we no longer meet to draw water from a well. Virtually the only communal activity that exists now is talking about television programmes we have watched.

But although I see where the bishop is leading us (and think him

right on the main point), it doesn't all add up. It may be part of the modern malaise to sit at home engrossed in the newspaper horoscope rather than trudging off in the cold and the dark to Church, but a need for community is every bit as fundamental to humans (more, even) than a need for spiritual belief. Indeed, the two come together in the need for ritual, for ceremony, and are thus most efficiently met by church or synagogue or mosque.

None of this explains why we now prefer to go to New Age cranks for old-style cures rather than pursuing the more traditional, orthodox route to spiritual satisfaction or medical treatment, for that matter. As the Church realises, the clergy and the clairvoyants are, to some extent, in the same business.

Is an irrational belief in star signs any better or worse than an irrational belief in God? Churchmen don't deny that they require an irrational belief: indeed, that is the essence of faith. Faith is necessarily set against reason, against science. As indeed are all those who believe in horoscopes. And like the bishop, I condemn astrology, but because it is an offence against science, not because it is an offence against God.

This may be the technological age, but it is marked by a popular anti-scientific movement, which proudly, pointedly, prefers the darkness to the light. Anyone who believes in star signs (or astrology or homeopathy or whatever) believes that to have their particular belief denounced as unscientific is to its and their credit.

That's how stupid it all is: if it cannot be proved it must, in the higher scheme of things, be right: is the form of reasoning followed. But even if one ignores for the moment the fact that there is not one iota of scientific proof for astrology, one should remind the new believers that the horoscope was invented before anyone knew about Pluto or Uranus. Even within its own terms it is thus a flawed system of belief. And since the obstetrician or midwife asserts 60,000 times more gravitational force on the baby being born than the nearest planet, I truly can't see how anyone who wants to be taken halfway seriously could even begin to give astrology the time of day.

But they do, they do. And that's what bothers me. It always used to be that just the stupid people believed in it all. But now perfectly respectable people do, if people who do could be called perfectly respectable. During both my pregnancies I was astonished to find it common to be asked — or more often told — about the baby's star sign. Quite frankly, I do not expect my friends to know about such things, or not in detail, let alone express an interest.

I never dare be quite as withering as I feel when expected to lower myself into a conversation about star signs, although I don't know why I should be so constrained by the desire not to offend when I feel pretty offended and intellectually bemused by being drawn into such an idiotic exchange.

Out of politeness, I confess I did once allow my astrological chart to be drawn, when a friend of a friend offered and I was too spineless to refuse. I can't remember a thing except that I am apparently born under the same planetary conjunctions as George Orwell. Unfortunately, it doesn't seem to mean I am equipped with his genius, but that's astrology for you.



Nigella Lawson



The Oxford University Congregation voted against Wafic Said's business school scheme, but that has made him more determined than ever to see it through

'My battle with the dons'

In his palatial apartment in Eaton Square, London, Wafic Said awaits a telephone call from Oxford. It will tell him that dons have decided to hold a postal ballot on whether to accept his £20 million to fund a business school in the centre of Oxford.

The spectacle of leather-elbowed dons spurning filthy lucre is now familiar. But Mr Said — who resembles Sir Anthony Hopkins in Hamlet's Lear mode when he studies — is gracious about their mistrust, even amused by it.

"Had I frittered my money on a luxurious yacht, nobody would mind," he laughs. "But try to do something worthwhile, and they look for ulterior motives."

The butler brings coffee. The lamps are lit, because the book-lined room is darkened by his next-door neighbour's scaffolding. Who is the tiresome neighbour? "His Grace," replies Mr Said, "the Duke of Westminster. He is our landlord, how can I complain? But I sent a note asking the builders to refrain from banging this afternoon."

All cash-strapped colleges at Oxford and Cambridge must wheedle funds out of tycoons, and I am on my way to my old Cambridge college's annual fund-raising event. Why did Mr Said, who read economics at Cambridge (St John's, 1961-3) not offer his money to Cambridge? He says he did; but he was beaten to it. The Judge Business School (benefactor Sir Paul Judge) was already under way.

He believes last week's vote was a rejection of the Mansfield Road site, not of him. And it was hardly representative. "Only 15 per cent of the Congregation attended, and only eight per cent voted against. How can eight per cent defeat such an important project? We must know the verdict of the other 85 per cent."

A business school in Oxford was not his idea in the first place. "In 1990 Oxford decided it wanted a world class business school in the centre of Oxford life. They needed funds of £40 million and appealed

Wafic Said intends to donate £20m to fund a business school at Oxford. The academics have voted against it. But the battle is not over. Interview by Valerie Grove.

to me. I agreed to give 50 per cent. People think I insisted on the site. That is not the case. The university presented it as suitable.

"We selected an imaginative architect (Dixon-Jones) and as the Vice-Chancellor said, we are giving a garden back to Oxford."

Mr Said, who has several homes, including one in Marbella, can live where he pleases, but he says: "I have chosen England." He married his English wife Rosemary, a Cheltenham Ladies' College girl, 27 years ago. He has an Oxfordshire estate of 30,000 acres. Henry Cecil trains his horses. "The horse embodies what is strong and beautiful in Arab culture. I always love racing — even more since I started winning classics. And I admire the democratic institutions of this country — including the freedom of the press, ha ha ha!"

His father was Syria's education minister who founded Damascus's university in the Twenties during the French mandate. Wafic Said went to a Jesuit school in Beirut. After Cambridge, he dabbled in banking and in 1967 opened two restaurants in Kensington, High Street, decorated like an Arab tent, with Lebanese dancers. "It was terribly fashionable, but most of the customers were friends who did not pay their bills."

Oxford's objections are perfectly clear to him. "Some are against the site because 30 years ago the University pledged not to build on it. Some are against having a management school at Oxford at all. And finally there are those who are against me because they do not like me."

"I say to them, if it is any comfort to them, I am not an arms dealer. I have never sold so much as a pen knife. I am Syrian born, I am proud of it, and I am an admirer of Mrs Thatcher. And if this presents a

problem, I am very sorry." Yes, he was the agent responsible for fixing Britain's biggest defence order, the £20 billion Al-Yamamah contract with Saudi Arabia.

"I was involved in my small way in defending the interests of Britain. The project brought tremendous benefits to the nation for the last seven years."

"Something like 400,000 people have worked on it. But if I am an arms dealer then the chairman of British Aerospace is an arms dealer, and the Prime Minister is an arms dealer."

Yes, of course he profited from the deal. "All Saudi businessmen gained indirectly, because a programme like that requires much infrastructure, construction and maintenance, after the boom of the Eighties."

Lord Jenkins, photographed beaming alongside Mr Said in the *Oxford Magazine*, says the benefaction will put Mr Said among those "to whom Oxford has given immortality."

"I am not the first person to want to attach his name to a college," says Mr Said. "It is the usual practice for big benefactors, from Balliol onwards."

In America, universities rely on such private philanthropy. "People are proud to make money and are respected for giving it. But here it is not *comme il faut*. People are suspicious." He has always been discreet about his gifts in the past. His benefaction to the Royal Shakespeare Company was published not by him but by Lord Alexander, his fellow trustee.

"I am not used to accepting interviews. I do not consider myself a public figure. I will never run for public office. We are private people. Islam tells you to conduct business with discretion. In our culture, when you give a benefaction you lose the merit with God if you publicise it."

But Sir Bernard Ingham has advised him "to say what my heart wants to say. So I must speak for

the first time about my charitable foundation, because people asked why did I not give money to my own country." The Karim Rida Said Foundation, named after his son who drowned 15 years ago, funds education and health projects in the Middle East, and enables British students to study in Alexandria.

"Somehow, there was a perception that we kept the business school project a secret. But this was because, during our early discussions, my son was offered a place at Balliol to read law and Professor Richard Southwood undertook to keep it under wraps until after my son graduated. So it was two days after my son's results came out last summer that they announced it."

This was shortly after Dr Gert-Rudolph Flick's withdrawal of his gift to Oxford when dons objected on the grounds of his Nazi ancestry. "I happen to know the gentleman, a very generous man. To behave like this to a man who wanted to give something to Oxford was wrong. The university never asked him to withdraw his benefaction, but I think he did not want to face the hassle."

"Let's face it, is this going to deter private donors in the future? Of course."

But he will not withdraw. "We

have worked on this for almost five years and many people have committed themselves to it. It is worth fighting for."

He knows that suspicion centres on the fact that his foundation will own the business school: "We will oversee the construction of the building. It is nonsense that we will have a say in the academic running of the school."

"It will be run by ten trustees, six of them appointed by me, but approved by the Vice-Chancellor — including myself, Sir Charles Powell and Lord Alexander — and four by the university. The only other power the foundation has is the appointment of the director, Professor John Kay, one of the greatest economists in the country."

Of the dons I have spoken to, some will vote for the school "in order not to deter other benefactors" while others will vote against, not out of malice to Mr Said, or smugness about business courses, but because they think the university has been underhand. "Oxford is a very rebellious society," he said. "We don't want your bloody money," read a banner outside the Sheldonian last week. Mr Said shrugs: "What would undergraduates be coming to if they did not protest?"

If there is agreement by February 1, his benefaction stands. If next January's ballot of 3,200 dons goes against him, Mr Said will "bow and accept the decision. I would have no choice. Who am I to tell Oxford what to do? But it would be regrettable, heartbreaking, a terrible blow. And everyone would lose."

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Alan Coren



Worry about asteroids? Not me — I'm too busy planning my fossilisation

Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be fossilised in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.

Indeed, Sir, it does a pretty good job even when he knows there's only an outside chance, because he doesn't know how outside that chance might be. He could start getting fossilised any minute. That is why Dr Duncan Steel, the Director of Project Space Guard, is so eager to establish, as soon as possible, a global network of monitoring stations to watch for giant asteroids heading earthwards. He wants us to be prepared for the end of the world as we know it. He said so on Tuesday's *Today* programme, since when I have been unable to concentrate my mind on anything else.

Because while there is nothing any of us can do about the end of the world as we know it, except say goodbye to it, there is something all of us can do about the beginning of the world as we don't know it, and that is say hello to it. For what, according to Dr Steel, this giant asteroid will do after it has collided with Earth is what its ancestor did to the dinosaurs: its impact having generated enough dust to blot out the sun, the consequent end of nourishing photosynthesis will mean that, when man has finished his last tin of pilchards and pot of noodles, he, along with all other living beings, will have his clogs popped from under him, following which an Ice Age will rapidly roll in to fossilise him to the spot.

Thereafter, nothing will happen for aeons. But eventually — perhaps from under the inert dust, perhaps from under the defrosted sea — something will crawl. It might even hop. Either way, it will not of course be much of anything, but given the passage of several further aeons, it will gradually develop arms, legs, grunts, fire, wheels, and, in inevitable course, a Museum of Natural History to which it can drag its children on rainy afternoons.

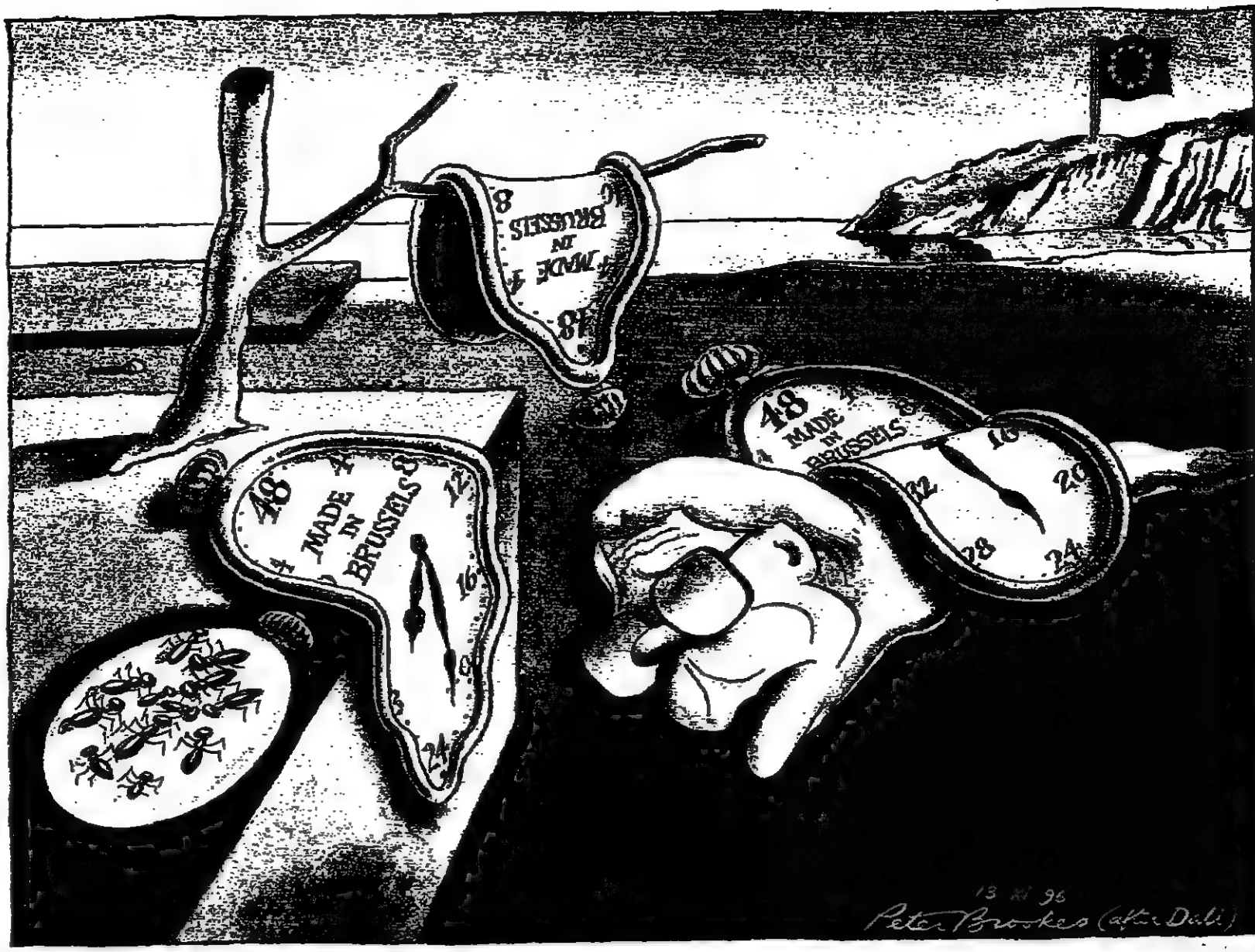
This is where we, you and I, come in. Again. This is where we say the hello mentioned several million years ago, as it were. We do not of course speak this hello, since we are nothing but stony bones, or if you prefer, bony stonies, but our painstakingly excavated presence — on plinths, in showcases, or, if we are really lucky, wired together and hanging from the ceiling — will enable our incalculably remote successors to get the message, and reconstruct our lives.

Clearly, therefore, we have to sort out our renaissance now, before it is too late (true, I went into the garden last night and looked up and saw nothing untoward — or, more to the point, toward — but an astronomer friend tells me that some of these asteroids can go like the clappers, a fortnight is a long time in galactic), which is why I wanted to alert you to your duty today. And duty it is, if we wish to present our distant posterity with not merely an appealing picture of ourselves and our civilisation, but with one from which it may take example.

I must of course leave you to make your own decisions as to how you choose personally to dispose yourselves for immortality, but if I may presume to nudge you in what I feel to be the right direction, let me say that, for myself, as Jack Frost begins to nibble terminally at my toes, I shall make certain that I am not holding a pistol, a combat knife, a personal organiser, an ashtray, a mobile phone, a novelty air-freshener, or the hand of an estate agent, but, rather, a fine quality omelette-pan, a cricket bat (yes, the wood will rot, but a telling indentation should remain), a small bust of Shakespeare, a ukulele, a non-digital half-hunter, snuff like that. As to my preferred demotour, since I rather doubt that a horse could be persuaded to stand still long enough for me to be fossilised on it, I may instead, though it is admittedly less glamorous, arrange to be fossilised in a bath, which would at least show what hygienic folk the Ancient Britons were.

After all — which of course is when they come — the most important thing with fossils is to leave a good impression.

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The opium of profit

As a visit to Hong Kong confirms,
Britain has been right to introduce
democracy to the colony — albeit belatedly

Tomorrow afternoon, the House of Commons will, possibly for the last time, debate the internal affairs of a British overseas colony. There should not be much to debate. There is no option left, no great policy to be determined. In seven months, Hong Kong will not be Britain's concern. It will change owners from one of the world's most liberal empires to its most repressive. God rest its soul.

Hong Kong is crossing this political Styx with lavish provisions. A colony built on the profit of opium has been rebuilt on the profit of profit. If money obeyed the laws of gravity, Hong Kong would by now have slid into the South China Sea. Money cascades from the Peak to Causeway Bay in a golden stream. Breathe a word, let alone a matter of principle, that might impede that stream, and the demons of the Hongs will curse you to the skies. Departing colonial governors used to be tormented by Mau Mau and Eoka death squads. The outgoing Governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, is tormented only by millionaires worried about their trunks.

His tormenting gives a deathbed élan to Britain's departure. Has Mr Patten been right to pursue democracy so assiduously this past five years? Was his confrontation with Peking wise and principled, or foolish and impractical? It doesn't matter any more. The die is cast. But it passes the time over cocktails.

The anti-Patten faction is dominated by the Manichean figure of the former diplomat Sir Percy Cradock. He claims that Mr Patten's last-minute obsession with the democratic Legislative Council, which came into being just two years ago, was senselessly provocative — typical of a politician rather than a diplomat. To the "realists", policies should be guided by what best keeps Hong Kong in Peking's good books after 1997, not what suits Mr Patten's career plans back home. The people of Hong Kong and their tenuous freedoms are desperately at risk. No favour is done to them by Mr Patten hurling V-signs at China as *Brian's* sails off into the night next July, however good the fireworks.

To the realists, the reference in the 1984 Joint Declaration to elections, and China's off-repeated pledge of "one nation, two systems", are just matters of face and bluff. Never upset China, they say. Tibet did that and look what happened to Tibet. Besides, Britain's future commercial interests in China are no

small matter. Sometimes money talks: sometimes money is right to know.

This cuts no ice with Mr Patten. He points out with some exasperation that Hong Kong's dealings with China have done nothing but prosper since the supposed advent of confrontation in 1992. Its output has risen by a quarter, exports by two-thirds and investment by 40 per cent. He might even point out that if China "needs Hong Kong more than Hong Kong needs China" — a phrase beloved of commercial analysts — then confrontation is of no account. A cynic might even say that Britain could have sent out a chimpanzee as Governor and it would not have dented profit or made China more or less disposed to Britain.

The implication of this argument is that Britain should in 1992 have sent out a "sensible Governor" to take the money and run. London would have continued the Foreign Office policy of disregarding democratic pressure within the colony. Come next July, a handful of loyalist Chinese officials and businessmen would have grabbed their passports and vanished, leaving Hong Kong's citizens with no institutions through which to express their views, whether to Britain or to China. I imagine there would have been riots in the streets. This was an untenable policy in 1992 and would be more so now. No thesis is more absurd than that past colonial rule from London is no different in principle from future Chinese rule from Peking. True, London has been tardy in giving democracy to Hong Kong — even today the Legislative Council has no control over the executive. But at least London believes in democracy. China does not.

Mr Patten has achieved two goals in wandering through this mausoleum of empires. He has honoured a commitment freely negotiated with China in 1994 to put in place in the colony an elected assembly that might have life

after 1997. Britain has made a good habit of leaving its colonies in passably democratic order. Since last year the old Supreme Court building in central Hong Kong has witnessed an activity unknown on the Chinese mainland: a freely elected body laying into its governors with abandon. Dominated by the fiercely articulate Martin Lee and Emily Lau, this assembly has damned Mr Patten for not going even further down the route to democracy. It was not Mr Patten's fault that this journey was not begun sooner.

What he has done is demonstrate, however briefly, an object lesson in how capitalism must work *table d'hôte*, to those who believe it can be ordered *d la carte*. Hong Kong has succeeded not just by being a low-tax free port with a vast hinterland where labour is cheap. It has succeeded because dynamic entrepreneurs prefer a regime that respects civil rights, tolerates a free press, protects markets and promotes on merit.

Hong Kong has changed a great deal from the colonial satrapy that I visited ten years ago. It is almost a mature political entity. The colony's greatest challenge has been corruption. But there is no comparison between its experience of this plague and the massive corruption that passes for "opening up the economy" in China. Just wait and see.

The significance of the Patten legacy will be impossible to judge for some years. Whether or not British firms will lose future contracts is hard to predict. All we know is that British rule has enabled them to become very rich in the past. Hong Kong is now swarming with collaborators eager to assure Peking and its friends that they are foursquare against Mr Patten. The executive Peking is likely to choose for the colony, the

tycoon C.H. Tung, is already in receipt of enough kowtows to keep the contracts rolling into the millennium. We need not cry for Hong Kong on this score.

I expect that the city will see a year or two of boom as China's new breed of state businessmen push their noses to the trough. But only a fantasist could ignore reality. This city-state is to become part of China. Though nobody in Hong Kong cares to mention it now, China is one of the world's political dinosaurs. It is a centralised Communist dictatorship in which dissidents are imprisoned or shot and minorities are suppressed. Neighbouring states are still conquered and most new wealth goes to the corrupt party "princelings" of Peking.

Sooner or later, push will come to shove in Hong Kong. China's Mr Tung had to be bailed out by the Bank of China, where he faced bankruptcy, a habit that will doubtless catch on. The Communists will not put up with true open-market competition in Hong Kong, or with press freedom, or with an independent judiciary. And what of the colony's own party cadres, which are to have a millionaire foisted on them as boss? When comes their pay-day?

The real danger to British interests in China comes well down the line. It will come when the Chinese have made a complete hash of Hong Kong and the past decade will be declared by one and all to have been a golden age. Then Peking will be angry. The British legacy will be described as a fuse left burning to ignite every act of dissent against China. That fuse should be a source of pride. Britain is leaving not just a gilded cash-register on the Chinese coast, but a minor monument to Western political values. Europe may be poor at micro-chips and motorbikes, but it is good at the art of government with the consent of the people. Nobody is ramming democracy down Hong Kong's throat. Every survey indicates that its citizens want more not less self-rule. Next July, Peking will face a straight choice: to continue Mr Patten's path to democracy or to install autocracy. It plainly intends autocracy.

That is China's sovereign right. But for Britain not to have left that choice open would have been the true betrayal of Hong Kong. More than that, I believe it would have betrayed whatever honour lay in Britain's whole imperial enterprise. Europe has little to be proud of in the Far East. But at the moment it does at least have Hong Kong.

Simon Jenkins

pointed Minister for Sport later that year. Moyihan had been cox to the successful Oxford Boat in 1977... which was coached to victory by Topolski.

Ladies?

THE 2500 feminists gathering for an international conference on violence and women's citizenship will return home having struck a memorable blow for female emancipation.

Campaigns for free abortion on demand and for lesbian adoption rights have yet to come to fruition.

● In the pouring rain outside the Commons the other night, Alan Rusbridger, the Editor of The Guardian, hailed a cab hoping to be taken to television studios for an interview. Simon Hughes, the extraordinary cab-driving Liberal Democrat MP, wound down his window — bringing to mind Mohamed Al Fayed's memorable suggestion that MPs could be rented in the same way as hiring a taxi.

But the Doc-Marten-clopping sisters will not forget their coup: the storming of the gentlemen's conveniences at the Brighton Conference Centre, where they banished all half-dozen of the male delegates and commandeered the facilities by putting a sign on the door: "These are women's toilets. Men elsewhere."

The boys wisely looked for an alternative.

● In the pouring rain outside the Commons the other night, Alan Rusbridger, the Editor of The Guardian, hailed a cab hoping to be taken to television studios for an interview. Simon Hughes, the extraordinary cab-driving Liberal Democrat MP, wound down his window — bringing to mind Mohamed Al Fayed's memorable suggestion that MPs could be rented in the same way as hiring a taxi.

Cheque up

ASIL NADIR, the fugitive and friend of Michael Mates, has been reduced to paying cash for groceries in his native northern Cyprus. He has been banned from writing cheques for a year: banks have been told not to issue him with a chequebook.

Nadir's name has been circulated in a government blacklist. The news has been reported with rel-



New nadir for Asil

ist by Turkish Cypriot newspapers, with the exception of *Kibris*, the biggest-selling daily — which is owned by Nadir. Apparently Nadir wrote £800,000-worth of cheques to a friend; who hoped to use them as collateral for a loan. They bounced, and the dapper chap once known as the Sultan of Berkeley Square, on account of his lavish outlook, is now counting loose change.

P.H.S

Why our opt-out did not work

Iain Duncan Smith
says we must dam
the flood at source

Yesterday the European Court of Justice finally dismissed the British Government's challenge over the working time directive on the 48-hour working week. What is clear from this decision is that the Commission, the Council of Ministers and the European Court of Justice believe Britain's social chapter opt-out is inconsistent with the process of political union in Europe. Thus the principle is established. Not only will the Court chip away at our derogations, but it has opened the door to a flood of regulations which the Commission has in waiting, such as increased holiday rights for fathers, more regulations on sex discrimination, regulations on part-time workers, workers' privacy and others. What successive governments wrongly thought of as general provisions on social policy in the Treaty of Rome are clearly much more powerful, and are being used against us.

It is a key decision also because it is the first such article to originate in the social charter, the predecessor of the social chapter. It was not then advanced under provisions for "health and safety in the workplace", but in the "living and working conditions" section. But all the Commission needed to do was change the heading, which is a clear demonstration of how the institutions of the EU use the treaty for their own political ends.

In 1991, the Prime Minister was absolutely right to reject the provisions of the social chapter. The opt-out was an attempt to protect Britain's competitive position. However, yesterday's decision demonstrates that there were two serious problems with this position from the outset. The first is that although we opted out of the social chapter, we remained bound by a set of 80 existing articles on social policy in the treaty. These are worded in such a way as to give the European Court of Justice massive scope to enforce such regulations as the working time directive. Worse than that, the key articles in this section are covered by qualified majority voting, which means that once a regulation is proposed in this section, Britain has no veto. Ironically this was bolstered by the European Court of Justice, which made it clear in a judgment that the Commission was within its rights to select an article covered by majority voting, rather than one carrying a national veto. This was in 1991, at the time of the Maastricht negotiations.

The second problem is that even though we opted out of the social chapter, the other member states continue to use the institutions of the EU to run the social chapter. This made it inevitable that they would eventually work to bypass our opt-out, using the main part of the treaty.

This of course highlights a serious flaw in the Labour Party's thinking. Gordon Brown and Tony Blair, knowing how unpopular the social chapter is, have been saying that they will sign up to it but will continue to use the veto. The reality is quite different. Once they have signed up to the Chapter, our partners will force most of the other directives through on qualified majority voting, using existing treaty articles, which Tony Blair will not be able to stop. Either the Labour Party knows this and is deliberately trying to deceive the British public, or it is demonstrating a degree of stupidity which shows its unfitness for government.

The British economy is in a strong condition, but is under threat from this decision. With low levels of inflation, strong growth and falling unemployment, our economy is becoming the envy of other members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. This success, on which the Prime Minister was right to place such emphasis this week, is made possible by the flexibility of our workforce and by the lack of unnecessary regulations in our marketplace, which means that non-wage costs here are half those of in other EU countries.

The Prime Minister has said that he will fight this decision at the inter-governmental conference — a move we can all support. He will do so on the principle that member governments should be responsible to their own electorates for the levels of social provision and cost. As global competition increases, Britain will be right to insist that we remain competitive not just in Europe but everywhere else.

However, the logic of this argument must lead us to insist that the sort of drive towards a Europe-wide social policy that is envisaged in the treaty and enshrined in the eight articles is wrong. We should seek to extend the principle of opt-out to cover the articles already in the treaty, for it is they which empower the European Commission and Court of Justice. It is an opportunity to safeguard our own position and subsequently to lead the EU out of the trap of falling competitiveness. Any deal at the inter-governmental conference which does not more than negate this decision will be only temporary, for the Commission and the Court will continue their drive to bypass our opt-out.

The issue at the general election will be how to continue the British economic success, which has brought falling unemployment and growing prosperity. This European decision is therefore directly related, and will be a core component in showing the Conservative determination to protect our economic record. At Maastricht we damned part of the river; we must now insist on damming the rest.

The author is the Conservative MP for Chingford.

Feet first

NEW DEPTHS of vulgarity have been plumbied by the Duchess of York, who is promoting herself in self-playing style on television chat-shows in New York. Not only has she been criticising "the system, the firm, the grey men, the institution" of the Royal Family for her fall from grace: she now blames Diana, Princess of Wales, for giving her verrucas.

She spotted the scourge of prep-school matrons on her soles when she was single and hobnobbing with her friend, the newly wed Princess of Wales. "When I lived

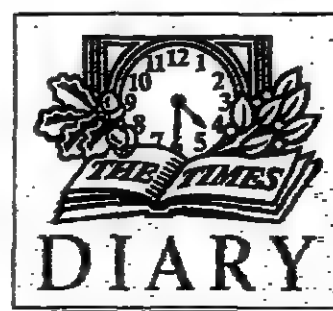
in Clapham, Diana helped me by giving me all her shoes (and, less happily, her verrucas)," she writes in *My Story*, her autobiography.

Yesterday, her office refused to elaborate or to comment on suggestions that she might have given her lover John Bryan foot-and-mouth disease. Medical experts discount Diana as a source of infection, however. "Verrucas have a very long incubation period — up to 18 months," says Thomas Stuttaford, the *Times* doctor. "She can't say she got them from Diana. She's far more likely to have caught them from lounging about by a French swimming pool."

● An early prize for tastelessness in Christmas books goes to *Last Dinner on the Titanic*, destined for the cookery sections. With recipes and menus from the ship's five-star restaurant, "this lavishly illustrated gift book includes suggestions for music, serving and decorations". Let's hope it sinks without trace.

Job specs

AGE MUST be catching up with Michael Heseltine, the wild-eyed



one still lusting after the top job.

He arrived late to deliver the main speech at the Association of County Councils' conference this week.

With hair flapping, he patted his pockets in dismay: "One small problem. I haven't got my reading glasses. Has anyone got a pair?" Up popped a local council executive with a very un-Heseltineish pair of specs. They were round and steel-framed and, when perched upon the deputy-prime-ministerial nose, transformed him into an elderly but stately version of the troublesome pop star Liam Gallagher.

● Dan Topolski, the Oxford rowing coach, was an adviser on the film *True Blue*. But while Topolski is played by a Belgian actor, Johan Leysen, Dan himself appears as the umpire of the Boat Race. In fact, the 1987 umpire was Colin Moyihan, who was ap-



"But darling, we might be hit by an asteroid soon"



Step on it, duchess



EUROPE ISN'T WORKING

Social legislation should be made in Britain, not Brussels

The European Court of Justice's ruling that Britain must implement the working time directive is objectionable in principle and will prove damaging in practice. In a Europe of nation states centralised authority should not be intervening in this way to dictate arrangements between employers and workers. Lost independence aside, this directive will cost industry jobs and the taxpayer money. The Government is determined to exercise its veto over institutional reform in Europe until a treaty is agreed which will guarantee Britain's exemption from the directive. There is a political advantage for the Tories in fighting on this ground, but they would not need to fight this battle if they had been better stewards of Britain's sovereignty in the past.

Advocates of limiting working hours have argued that it enhances the quality of life and increases employment by protecting workers from exploitation and encouraging industries to recruit new employees to take up the slack. In practice, it has the opposite effect. Companies that cannot roster workers to meet demand see their customers go elsewhere. A competitive advantage is lost, and in due course, so are jobs. Far from granting any social benefit, such legislation is likely to increase the number who need to claim state benefits and reduce the capacity of the economy to pay for them.

The knowledge that labour market regulation makes it more difficult for labour to find a market drove the Conservatives' supply-side reforms in the Eighties. But even as Britain was adopting the flexibility that has seen it secure the lowest level of unemployment of any major European economy, its partners were moving in the opposite direction. In 1989, inspired by the bicentennial of the French Revolution, Francois Mitterrand sought to confer new, "social", rights on Europe's citizens to complement the economic freedoms secured by the single market. The engine for the propagation of these rights was the social chapter of the Maastricht treaty. Recognising that the

chapter could undo a decade of reform, John Major secured his "opt-out".

This, however, has proved a legislative Maginot Line. The European Commission has classified regulations on working hours as "health and safety" matters rather than social. Health and safety legislation is covered by Article 118 of the Single European Act and is subject to qualified majority voting. Britain is thus powerless in law to resist the measure. The Advocate-General to the European Court has argued, in a manner that would have fit well in the world of Lewis Carroll, that "health...is social and does not consist of just being free of sickness". The Court, which exists to advance integration, has been only too happy to see the exemption nullified.

Mr Major believes he has been traduced. He has pledged not to agree to any treaty revision until he secures a guarantee that his opt-out is as effective as he hoped. There is, however, an element of attitudinising in Mr Major's stance. No-one expects any treaty revision to be agreed until after the election. Diplomatic work can continue behind the scenes while the Prime Minister has no need to agree to anything in public. Mr Major can appear the defender of British independence and point Labour as Brussels's handmaiden — all in a way that does not divide his party.

While the Prime Minister may attempt to display righteous indignation, he cannot claim he was not offered advanced warning. During the passage of the Bill to ratify the Maastricht treaty Mr Major was told that the social chapter opt-out was not an effective protection against social legislation. As Iain Duncan Smith points out on the opposite page, Britain is still bound by eight articles in the treaty which govern social policy. The Government is right to fight now, but the only assurance that ministers will not need to fight, fight and fight again in the future is a renegotiation of the treaty which does not simply provide new opt-outs to be outflanked but throws the federalist ratchet into reverse.

HOMES FIT FOR HEROES

The Gurkha families should be accommodated in Britain

On Monday the nation's thoughts turned to those who died for their country in various conflicts throughout this century. Not least among those who made the ultimate sacrifice are the Gurkhas who have served the British Army since 1815 and won the Victoria Cross on 26 occasions.

Yesterday, Mr Shree Bahadur Deuba, the Prime Minister of Nepal, met with John Major to petition the Prime Minister on Gurkha concerns. There are now some 4,000 Gurkhas present in our Armed Forces. Until this month they were predominantly stationed in Hong Kong with pockets in Britain and Brunei. With the closure of their Hong Kong base, some 2,000 troops will be transferred to this country to join the 5th Airborne Brigade. Their grievances are twofold: the level of pensions paid to former servicemen and the refusal of the Ministry of Defence to offer housing to the families of the 1st Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles.

The Nepalese Prime Minister urged Mr Major to look at pension provision for the Gurkhas. They currently receive barely 15 per cent of the rate enjoyed by British soldiers. That produces a sum ranging from £22 to £79 per month. That might seem a paltry amount but looks more credible when set against an average annual income in Nepal of £200. Furthermore, the Gurkhas provide men not only for Britain but the armies of India and Nepal as well. In the longer term, the main military future of the Gurkhas lies in Asia, not Aldershot. Those armies could not possibly expect to sustain respectable levels if much more attractive financial arrangements were made available by this country. Although there are important questions concerning those who

for several reasons, fail to qualify for pensions, on the core matter the Ministry of Defence has a solid argument.

On the issue of military housing, however, Whitehall stands on much more dubious ground. While stationed in Hong Kong the Gurkha regiment did enjoy provision for married accommodation. As the custom in Nepal is for young men to marry usually before the age of 21, such provision was vital to sustaining a sizeable force. In addition, a school devoted to the promotion of Nepali culture existed. No such facility can be provided by the Church Crookham barracks. This means Gurkha families must return to Nepal from Hong Kong and has caused great resentment.

The ministry notes, accurately, that Gurkhas stationed in Britain have never been provided with such housing before. This is true but the proportion of all soldiers serving in this country has never been as high as it will be now that their task in Hong Kong has ended. What might have been reasonable to tolerate when a tour of duty to Britain formed a relatively small proportion of a Gurkha's life is not so easily defended in these new circumstances. Britain's position appears churlish.

Michael Portillo, to his credit, has not ruled out a reconsideration. The new quarters being constructed for the Gurkhas at the John Moore Barracks in Folkestone could be adapted to include substantial married accommodation if the money and the political will can be found. It should be — not only because of the debt of honour we owe for distinguished service in the past but as an act of foresight if the MoD's recruitment problems persist.

CAVIARE CRISIS

Why sturgeons were sticklers for communism

Caviare was always the supreme irony of Soviet Russia. When the shop counters were bare, the queues unending and even the simplest provisions rationed, caviare, the delicacy that was a byword in the capitalist world for conspicuous consumption and a champagne lifestyle, was freely available. It was piled high in the better restaurants; it was the standard snack served in the Bolshoi's crushbar; and, despite the cost, caviare, both red and black, was always the boast of every hostess, the pride of birthday celebration. The Anglo-American school in Moscow still remembers the African boy, asked to identify a picture of a tin of baked beans, exclaiming with delight "it's caviare". In Brezhnev's Russia, caviare was familiar; beans were unknown.

But as Russia turns capitalist, the caviare is disappearing. The Caspian Sea sturgeon that provided the elixir of the tsars are being rapidly hunted to extinction. Overfishing, the collapse of state controls, the plundering demands of smugglers and mafia bosses have all but ruined what was once an enormously profitable industry. Whereas 20 years ago Russia harvested some 2,000 tonnes of black caviare a year, last year's catch amounted to no more than 100 tonnes. Up to 90 per cent of the caviare now taken from the seas is smuggled. As the official price soars because of the shortage, the black market price of caviar has plummeted.

Fishing is one of the few industries where the case for regulation is overwhelming. However inefficient the economy of the former Soviet Union, the communists at least understood that the national treasure of their seas had to be nurtured and protected. Hatcheries then were properly organised, breeding seasons undisturbed, fishing quotas enforced and cross-border co-operation encouraged with Iran, the world's only other great caviare producer. All that has now been swept away. Pirate fishing boats are catching the magnificent female sturgeon before they are mature enough to produce the eggs; trawlers, previously banned, are decimating stocks; clandestine exporters are sending out caviare that is neither freshly stored nor properly packed. Only Iran is still able to enforce some sort of worthwhile controls at the southern end of the sea.

Western importers reckon that commercial sturgeon stocks will vanish within three years; conservationists estimate another five to ten years. As for the caviare now reaching the West, too often the eggs are stale or infected with chemicals washed into the polluted Caspian. Scandinavian lumpfish roe has already cornered the market in cocktail canapés; soon caviare, pricing itself beyond even the reach of the most ostentatious hostess, will be no more than a memory of a delicacy savoured and lost.

'Failure' of care in the community

From the Chair of the Mental Health Strategy Group, Association of Directors of Social Services

Sir, The news that the Government is to announce a "shake-up" of mental health care ("Radical policies to end the failure of care in the community", report, November 6) needs to be seen in perspective.

Mental distress is very common and will have touched every family; but severe illness is uncommon, and violence from people who are mentally ill is very rare, although its consequences are of course tragic. The vast majority of people with severe mental illness live settled lives in the community without incident and are offered good care when required.

This association believes that the spectrum of care will help the relatively few people who need long-term 24-hour care — and will in part replace the old long-stay hospitals which are rightly being closed. However, restructuring the organisation and management arrangements for mental health care will be no more than a diversion, creating different boundaries which will still have to be crossed for full care to be offered.

We would like to see a consultation document that will allow for informed discussion on how to improve effective care from all professionals, how to manage the sharing of information when the laws governing it are complex, and how to get more resources into community support, which is where they are most needed by the huge majority of users of mental health services.

Yours sincerely,
JENNIFER BERNARD,
Chair, ADSS Mental Health Strategy Group,
Social Services Department,
Civic Centre,
Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne.
November 7.

From Mr Peter Thurnham,
MP for Bolton North East
(Liberal Democrat)

Sir, Jill Sherman (report, November 6) correctly identifies the damaging division of responsibilities between health authorities and local councils as being the real problem with community care.

Labour and the Government may claim to be committed to action but only the Liberal Democrats have long called for a full merger between the two bodies — along with fundamental reform of local government — as the preferred solution to tackle the growing crisis.

The Government's White Paper is long overdue and further health funds are clearly a priority, not only for hospitals next year but in order to avert further disasters in community care this year.

Yours faithfully,
PETER THURNHAM
(Liberal Democrat spokesperson on community care),
House of Commons,
November 7.

From Mrs Elaine Isaacs

Sir, "Care in the community" has failed many mentally ill people. I have tried for nearly ten years to find out who was responsible for my late husband's care, which covered several hospitals in different health districts, general practitioners, the NHS and the private sector.

Tragically, many people with mental health problems are more likely to harm themselves than other people. Your report highlights the need for better co-ordination of services, more resources, and more care and support for mentally ill people and their carers. We also need to be aware of the public's misconceptions about mental illness and tackle the stigma and discrimination experienced both by people who are mentally ill and their families.

Most people who are mentally ill are voluntary patients, not detained under the Mental Health Act. There is very little redress for them or their families when something goes wrong, as tragically happened to my husband almost ten years ago.

Yours faithfully,
ELAINE ISAACS,
7 Dovehouse Close,
Whitefield, Manchester.
November 11.

Burges bottle

From Mr Christopher Lewis

Sir, Regarding your report (November 5) about the important Batavian bottle discovered at the Skegness Antiques Roadshow, I would like to make it clear that both our experts, David Battie and Paul Atterbury, were aware that the bottle was decorated by William Burges — his name was written round the bottom, after all. Both recognised it as an important "lost" piece and both agreed upon a valuation of £25,000-£30,000.

Your report may have given the impression that Mr Battie recognised the piece as just an ornament worth £200 — its value without the Burges decoration. This is incorrect.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER LEWIS
(Executive Producer,
Antiques Roadshow),
British Broadcasting Corporation,
Whiteladies Road, Bristol.

Business letters, page 29

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9JN. Telephone 0171-782-5000

Reducing the misery of infertility

From Dr T. R. Moss

Sir, The concept of a national screening programme to combat sexually-transmitted chlamydia disease is excellent ("Infertility linked to rapid spread of infectious disease", report, November 7), and the working party set up by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists is to be congratulated for addressing this issue.

In 1985 this genito-urinary unit, working in collaboration with the late Patrick Shephard, identified serological evidence of chlamydia infection in approximately one half of women seeking in-vitro fertilisation for fallopian tube infertility. To our surprise we found that the failure rate of embryo replacement was increased by a factor of two in those women where specific blood tests showed previous chlamydia infection. Research in this area continues at Cornell University.

For 16 years we have used screening by culture or antigen detection which identifies the chlamydia micro-organism. We have found that in later disease specific blood tests for chlamydia are invaluable and, to a degree, overcome cross-reaction to other (non-

genital) chlamydia agents. Combined with testing for the organism, it has allowed effective control of chlamydia disease in our local population.

This is evidenced indirectly by the work of our surgeons. In most UK units it would be expected that considerably more young women than young men would have their appendix removed for acute abdominal pain. Where effective chlamydia control has been achieved this ratio is reduced, as chlamydia can very closely mimic the features of appendicitis by irritating the outer membrane; in this unit the ratio is now one-to-one.

Not only will a national screening programme dramatically reduce the misery, suffering and cost of avoidable infertility; it may also save very considerable operative expenditure for "appendicitis".

Yours faithfully,
T. R. MOSS
(Clinical Director,
Genito-Urinary Medicine),
The Doncaster Royal & Montagu
Hospital NHS Trust,
Arnhorpe Road,
Doncaster, Yorkshire
November 7.

Moral values in school and society

From Mr Trevor Waller

Sir, Mr D. H. Bryant (letter, November 7) advises Glenn Hoddle to resign from football and to turn to social work. As a professional social worker of more than 20 years' standing, I would say that Mr Bryant reflects a harmful trend which has accelerated over the past 30 years.

It cannot be left to social workers to cure society's ills, just as the police and prisons cannot stop crime, or schools be the sole custodians of children's education. Each member of society needs to "broad" an attitude in which it is *de rigueur* to be helpful, morally in the right, and interested in the world around us.

Mr Hoddle sets a good example.

Yours faithfully,
TREVOR WALLER,
46 St Cadoc Road, Heath, Cardiff.
November 7.

From Professor Emeritus
T. F. Davenny

Sir, Since it is impossible to establish the validity of any moral code, either logically or scientifically (and that includes Western liberal codes based on human rights and freedoms), it might be expedient simply to inculcate in the young those virtues which enable society to function smoothly: for example, good manners, forbearance, honesty, benevolence, etc.

Never mind the metaphysics, just stick to Hooker's principle of "natural duty": if you want others to oblige you, yourself should be prepared to oblige others.

Yours etc.,
TOM DAVENNY,
The Old Chapel, Whiddon Down,
Okehampton, Devon.
November 7.

From the General Secretary of the
Professional Association of Teachers

Sir, I have been very privileged this week to attend the Albert Hall in London for the Schools Prom. What I was

able to witness there was a supreme example of the success of British education.

My last attendance was around ten years ago, and there is no doubt that standards have risen during that time. From my own knowledge of schools I know that behind what I saw, and heard there, are thousands of other youngsters, all achieving well under the direction of excellent and inspirational teachers; but where are the newspaper headlines, the reports and the television clips, proclaiming the excellence of the education system and extolling the competence of the teaching profession?

Media hype and parliamentary rhetoric seem only to want to concentrate on the negative, without allowing us to see what is positive. There are many, many more positive and good things to say about British education than we are hearing at the moment.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN R. ANDREWS,
General Secretary,
Professional Association of Teachers,
2 St James Court, Friar Gate, Derby.
November 7.

From the Reverend
Nicholas Charrington

Sir, It is interesting that Lord Rees-Mogg (article, October 23) and Viscountess Sidmouth (letter, October 31), in their criticism of the Roman Catholic bishops' report *The Common Good*, suggest that the fate of the unborn child is a matter for moral concern but the economics of a free market is not (see also letters, October 26).

I'm sure the bishops would agree that we should "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's". But can Caesar be trusted with the free market if God is to be kept out of it?

Yours sincerely,
NICHOLAS CHARRINGTON,
The Rectory,
Longden, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.
November 2.

A woman's role

From Ms Kate Hatfield

Sir, Nowhere in Roger Scruton's article ("The party of hubbub", November 6) is there any acknowledgement of the damage that can be done to women and therefore children in the kind of society he admires: based on traditional, "old fashioned" attitudes to marriage and family values.

It may well have given a man self-esteem to be able to "assert exclusive rights over the woman whom he chose", to provide for her, and to be sure that she would not expect "equal access to jobs traditionally performed by men". But consider what can happen to the self-esteem (and indeed the mental health) of a woman confined to domestic labour. Such an existence might be quite as unsuitable to her intellect and character as it would be to Scruton's.

The old sexual morality demanded fidelity of wives but gave licence to their husbands. What do women do if they are abandoned by their husbands? With no profession or income of their own, left in sole charge of the children, they face a bleak future.

There is a serious problem in society today, but the solution does not lie in a return to a world in which women had to pretend to be less than they were in order to support the myth of male superiority, a world in which if

they wished to keep themselves and their children fed they were forced to accept whatever their husbands might choose to impose on them.

Yours etc.,
KATE HATFIELD,
c/o Transworld Publishers Ltd,
61-63 Usbridge Road, W5.
November 6.

From Mr Alan Challoner

Sir, My one disagreement with Roger Scruton is his suggestion that it is "the centuries-old distinction of the masculine and the feminine, upon which the habit of marital fidelity depends".

Marital fidelity surely depends not upon differences but upon compatibilities. Those who are good friends and companions first, and who have trust and empathy with each other, are the ones whose eventual marriages are likely to last. Marriages based on what Scruton refers to as "sexual licence and the quick fix" are often built on sand.

As he suggests, "the family is built on sacrifice. It requires two people to provide for their children... [and have] fidelity, self-discipline, economy and faith in the future."

Yours faithfully,
ALAN CHALLONER,
13 The Village,
Bodelwyddan, Denbighshire.
November 6.

From Mr John Grant

Sir, Would Fowler have criticised the child, upstairs in bed, who asked his mother: "What did you bring that book I didn't want to be read to out of up for?"

Yours sincerely,
JOHN GRANT,
Pendle, 17 Stone Road, Bromley, Kent.
November 6.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Value of nation's pause for thought

From Miss Sierra Hutton-Wilson

Sir, A collective silence, whether observed at The Cenotaph or at a football stadium, leaves those who participate in no doubt as to its profound and lasting effect (reports, November 11 and 12).

While we are familiar with the moving ceremonies on Remembrance Sunday, it seems there are some who have yet to be fully convinced of the value of an additional two minutes' silence on the actual anniversary of the Armistice. It seems extraordinary to me that among that number were not only the disaffected youth I saw on television who thought it "all a waste of time", but also major stars such as John Lewis and Sade. What is also hard to understand is the generally low-key, low-priority coverage given in some sections of the media.

The British Legion deserves better support for its inspired and inspiring initiative. The whole point of observing the exact hour and day of the Armistice is to pause in the midst of normal activity and witness the nation coming to a standstill as one in honour those whose sacrifice made that freedom possible. In that moment lies the key to an inner reminder of our finer qualities: a potentially transformative experience of respect, gratitude, community, pride, hope and of resolve towards peace. Such sentiments need every encouragement in modern life.

Next year there should be no half measures. The British Legion, the Government, media, commerce and industry should give a wholehearted commitment to full participation and acknowledgement of our history and future resolve. For those who remain sceptical, I would simply say — try it.

Yours faithfully,
SIERRA HUTTON-WILSON,
Priory Cottage,
Church View, Evercreech, Somerset.
November 12.

Millennium dome

From Lord Birkett

Sir, Lady Panufnik's admirable letter (November 5) should remind the Millennium Commission that what it should celebrate is not the end of the last thousand years but the start of the next.

It would be salutary if no project were approved that did not stand a good chance of surviving at least the 21st century. It would be even more salutary if every project were to convey some lasting benefit on the inhabitants of these islands.

Yours faithfully,
BIRKETT,
House of Lords.
November 8.

From the Chief Executive of the
Millennium Exhibition

Sir, Lady Panufnik should rest easy. Money spent on the Millennium Exhibition will not be squandered as she appears to think. The £250 million investment in the Millennium Exhibition will lead to the regeneration of a deprived area of London. At least 5,000 jobs will be created to run the exhibition; the extension of the Jubilee Line will bring much-needed and improved public transport infrastructure to the area; and a currently derelict and contaminated gasworks site will be permanently transformed with landscaped gardens, park and river walk.

Yours faithfully,
BARRY HARTOP,
Chief Executive,
The Millennium Exhibition,
120 Old Broad Street, EC2.
November 8.

Blind justice?

From Mrs Sharon Pache

Sir, It is a far from comforting irony that the taxpayer will be responsible, at huge expense, for Mr Ali Noor's "accommodation" for the next 18 years, following his conviction for rape after he was granted asylum in this country (letter, November 5), while at the same time we are prepared to deport back Mr Jay Khadka to Nepal. Mr Khadka has been brought up and educated at no cost to the State in a caring, loving family (report, November 8).

This family will now be torn apart, or alternatively leave the country together, thus depriving us of law-abiding, tax-paying individuals, probably with much besides to offer society.

My heart goes out to Jay Khadka and Richard Morley.

Yours faithfully,
SHARON PACHE,
Adant House, Waltham Road,
Terling, Chelmsford, Essex.
November 8.

Terminal cares

From Mr Quentin Purdy

Sir, You report Canon Jane Sinclair of Sheffield Cathedral ("Flock told to design their own funerals", November 7) as saying "It was relatively easy and helpful if people planned their funeral before they died".

Tray tell me, is there any other way? Yours faithfully,
QUENTIN PURDY,
2 Paper Buildings, Temple, EC4.
November 10.

OBITUARIES

FIM GIDAL

Tim Gidal, Israeli photographer, died in Jerusalem on October 6 aged 87. He was born in Munich on May 18, 1909.

Tim Gidal's work as a photographer reached its apogee in the massive visual history *The Jews in Germany from Roman Times to the Weimar Republic* which was published in Munich in 1988. It summed up a creative life which had begun in his native Munich, continued in Britain after 1933, and took him to Israel where he finally settled and was naturalised. En route, he spent periods in Switzerland and in the United States, of which he was also a citizen.

Besides his documentary records, he was also a pioneer of modern photojournalism — though he preferred to use the term *photoreportage*, implying the primacy of the visual image over words as the conveyor of the message. He had begun his life as a photographer on magazines in Munich and Berlin in the last days of the Weimar Republic. Fleeing from Hitler to Britain, he worked for a while for Stefan Lorant's *Picture Post* and later captured the action of the Second World War as a photographer with the British 8th and 14th Armies in North Africa and Burma.

Nahum Ignaz Gidalewitsch was the child of Russian Jewish parents who had settled in Munich. From 1928 he studied the history of art, economics and international law at Munich and Berlin universities. During this time he had also begun to contribute photo stories to *Münchner Illustrierte*, *Berliner Illustrierte* and *Die Woche*.

The photographs which were subsequently to form the basis for the exhibition *Memories of Jewish Poland, 1932-1939* were taken during this period. They depict the Jewish community of Owiczów (Auschwitz), a theme all the more haunting from the subsequent

history of the place. In these pictures, portraits of the Orthodox Jews on the misty twilight walk to the synagogue alternate with the long shadows cast by the lines of Zionist pioneers.

This was to be one of his last photographic essays in prewar Middle Europe. When Hitler came to power, Gidal left Germany but continued his studies at Basle University where he took his doctorate with a thesis on *Die Juden in der Literatur und in der Kunst*. Reporting and the Press, a novel subject in universities in those far-off days. Before "media studies" became a vogue.

In 1936 Gidal went to Palestine and for the next two years worked there, freelancing for British and American magazines. In 1938 he came to London where, until 1940, he worked for *Picture Post*. His photographic work for the magazine was of immense variety. He went to India and recorded village life and the impact of Mahatma Gandhi on the nation's consciousness. Gandhi, half naked before a microphone, admonishing a rapacious audience, is one of his most striking images.

But he also, and with equal penetration, affectionately recorded the British at home: on the streets of London and in provincial cities. He had a particular feeling for the texture of London life. His image of the bustle of evening on a West End pavement, while newspapers' billboards silently warn of impending war, is regarded with the sense of an age and a society about to be swept violently away.

From 1942 he served on the staff of the British Army magazine *Picador* where, as chief staff reporter, he held the rank of captain. As such he roved over the whole Middle Eastern theatre of war with the 8th Army, and subsequently with Shind's 14th Army in Burma.

In these disparate theatres, with their completely different conditions, he recorded an



London, 1939: Gidal captures the atmosphere of a West End street as war clouds gather

astonishing variety of scenes, from both sides. He is able, with admirable impartiality, to imbue the interior of a German bunker, adorned with a crudely drawn bathing belle under which is wistfully scrawled the legend "Wenn der Urlaub kommt" ("If we ever get leave"), with a poignancy equal to any of the war scenes he recorded.

In a different vein Burma, 1944 — weary troops tramping through dust raised by the passage of armoured fighting vehicles and artillery — is one of the classic images of infantry marching up the line to battle.

After the war Gidal returned to Jerusalem, where for

three years he worked as a freelance photographer. But America beckoned and claimed him for a while. In 1950 he went to New York as a consultant for *Life* magazine and stayed on there to lecture in visual communications at the New School for Social Research, from 1955 to 1958.

For another fifteen years he roamed the world as a freelance photographer and writer, publishing a score of books with his first wife Sonia. These took as their theme villages he had seen and recorded all over the world. Their sales — well over half a million altogether — gave him financial independence.

But in 1971 he decided to

return permanently to Israel, taking a job as a lecturer in visual communications at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

From this point onwards he was able to stage numerous exhibitions of his work which brought together the different strands of his experience. *Tim Gidal: in the 1930s*, an Israel Museum exhibition, was seen in London, New York, Berlin and Jerusalem. *Memories of Jewish Poland, 1932* travelled from the Museum of the Diaspora, Tel Aviv, to Jerusalem and Haifa and toured to the US, Germany, Switzerland, Poland and Austria. Museums in all these countries hold collections of his

work, as does the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Although he had dwelt among scenes of horror — as a Jew in Europe with the threat of Nazism impending; as a young Zionist in Palestine during the struggles of the 1930s; and as a war reporter — Gidal never lent his camera lenses merely to recording sensational images. Alike amid war or in the most innocuous scenes of domesticity, he captures a sense of humanity asserting itself over harsh or even simply frustrating circumstances.

Tim Gidal is survived by his wife, Pia, and by a son from his first marriage, which ended in divorce.

PROFESSOR HANS KOSTERLITZ

Hans Kosterlitz, FRS, former Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Aberdeen, died on October 26 aged 93. He was born in Berlin on April 27, 1903.

Kosterlitz was later proved right.

Over the following years he came to believe more and more that morphine was not an inhibitory drug but was an agonist (ie, an active substance) acting on its own receptor in the body. If this were true then *in vivo* the body must produce a substance which was the physiological agonist for that receptor. The opportunity to prove this came in 1973.

In 1934 a young German doctor, Hans Kosterlitz, arrived in Aberdeen to study with the then Regius Professor of Physiology, J.J.R. Macleod. He was to spend the next 62 years in the granite city, but he will be remembered far beyond Aberdeen as the pharmacologist who discovered the opioid peptides, the body's own "painkillers". This was one of the great pharmacological discoveries of the century; almost equally remarkable was the fact that the discoverer was in his seventies when he made it.

Hans Walter Kosterlitz studied medicine in Heidelberg, Freiburg and Berlin. From 1928 to 1933 he held an appointment as an assistant in the medical department of the University of Berlin, but while he was there, as well as doing clinical work, he was also able to pursue research, developing a particular interest in carbohydrate metabolism and liver disease in diabetic patients.

It was this interest in diabetes that brought Kosterlitz to Aberdeen. Professor Macleod, who, with Banting and Best, had discovered insulin in his laboratory in Toronto, had returned to Aberdeen as head of physiology, and Kosterlitz was keen to work with him. In fact, Macleod died the following year, but Kosterlitz stayed on to continue his research into galactose metabolism and the liver.

At the outbreak of war, feeling that his work should have more relevance to the national effort, Kosterlitz began to investigate how liver function was affected by diet, and in particular the effects of the quality and quantity of protein in the diet. His interest in this topic was to continue into the 1950s.

He then turned his attention to the vegetative nervous system and to the mysterious plexus of the gut. To this was added an interest in morphine, which developed after Kosterlitz read a paper by Paul Trendelenburg, published in 1917, which showed that morphine in very low concentrations inhibited the peristaltic reflex in the isolated ileum preparation of the guinea pig.

One of the most important pieces of research which Kosterlitz carried out in the 1960s showed that the analgesic potency of various narcotic analgesics could be predicted by their action on isolated peripheral tissues, and that these tissues could be used as a screening method for potential analgesics.

This research was met with scepticism by some who could not imagine how the action of a drug on a piece of intestine "jumping up and down" in an organ bath could tell anything about its action in the brain; but they were forgetting, of course, that the myenteric plexus is the "brain" of the gut.

Kosterlitz had remained in the department of physiology at Aberdeen from his arrival in 1934 until 1968, progressing from assistant and Carnegie teaching fellow to lecturer, senior lecturer and finally reader. As well as teaching physiology he also became responsible for the teaching of pharmacology, and in 1968, when a chair in that subject was created, Kosterlitz, at 65, became its first holder. Three years later, pharmacology became a separate department, with him as its head. (The department was to last only 20 years, with just one further head, before being incorporated into a department of biomedical sciences, much to Kosterlitz's displeasure.)

In 1973, when he reached 70, Kosterlitz finally had to retire. It was then, with research money from both sides of the Atlantic, that he set up the Unit for Addictive Drugs (where he was Director until the time of his death), to look for the endogenous morphine agonist. Within a short time his search was successful, and in 1975 he reported the discovery of the enkephalins, one of the landmarks of pharmacology.

He continued his research into opioid peptides, publishing his final paper in 1991. The work has led to a greater understanding of how the body deals with pain, even to an understanding of acupuncture, and provides a scientific rationale for the production of new narcotic analgesics.

Hans Kosterlitz inspired great devotion in those who worked with him. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1978, and the following year was awarded the Society's Royal Medal. His discovery of the opioid peptides also brought him the Schmiedeberg Plakette of the German Pharmacological Society, awarded in 1976 and presented to him by Professor Ullrich Trendelenburg, son of the scientist whose paper had first inspired Kosterlitz's interest in morphine.

He received the Albert Lasker Basic Medical Research Award in 1978 and the Wellcome Gold Medal of the British Pharmacological Society in 1982. He was also awarded honorary doctorates from the universities of Liège and Aberdeen. His 90th birthday was marked in 1993 by a meeting of the British Pharmacological Society in Aberdeen and by a civic luncheon in his honour.

In 1937, Hans Kosterlitz married Johanna (Hanna) Gressner. She survives him. Their only son, Michael, is Professor of Theoretical Physics at Brown University.

BERNARD LAFFERTY

Bernard Lafferty, butler to the American actress Doris Duke, died in Los Angeles on November 4 aged 51. He was born on April 14, 1945.

BERNARD LAFFERTY was the bibulous Irish butler who nursed the immensely wealthy Doris Duke through her last illness in 1993. Their friendship provided a fittingly bizarre postscript to the eccentric life of the much-married tobacco heiress.

An expert in the art of pleasing older women, Lafferty had arrived in the Duke household in 1964, and quickly taken the place of Chandi Heffner (her adopted daughter) as Doris Duke's confidant. He was attentive to his mistress's every whim. He spent hours every morning on her hair and make-up. He served her breakfast melon at exactly room temperature. For her part, Duke encouraged him to grow his reddish-brown hair into a pony tail

and to sport a gypsy hoop in his ear. From the moment he arrived, Lafferty did his best to ensure that no one but himself could come near her.

But the main mystery centred not on how they had become so close but rather on why Duke, on her deathbed, should suddenly have revoked her old will and made a new one which named her servant co-executor of her vast estate at a salary of \$500,000 a year. She also left him a lump sum of \$5 million.

Lafferty had developed expensive habits while living with Duke but he had little time to indulge these in the last three years of his life. Immediately she died, Duke's will was challenged by former employees. Lafferty was painted as a man who had cajoled a heavily sedated woman into giving him control of the estate — and perhaps even hastened her end. He became a familiar sight, fidgeting uncomfortably in the courtroom while lawyers argued over abstruse points of law (an exercise which he likened to Chinese water torture). Compared to a figure from a Gothic horror film, he felt that his job title was poisoning public opinion.

"The butler word they like," he said, "because it's always the butler who did it."

But no evidence of foul play was discovered. In April this year, after millions of dollars had been squandered on lawyers' fees, Lafferty relinquished his role as co-executor in exchange for a lump sum of \$4.5 million and a yearly income of \$200,000. Tales of Lafferty's profligacy, drinking bouts and reliance on an alarming array of drugs had given ammunition to his foes. His version of his childhood and early life, too, seemed suspiciously sparse.

Born near Cresslough in Co Donegal, he was orphaned when his parents died in separate road accidents.

Barely literate, he arrived in America in 1972 to live with an aunt. For ten years he worked in Philadelphia's Bellevue Stratford Hotel, and became friends with Elizabeth Taylor through his attentiveness towards her pets. Peggy Lee lured him away to become her butler, and passed him on to more Hollywood friends. After being dismissed by Chandi Heffner's brother-in-law for his heavy drinking, Lafferty secured the post of butler with Duke in 1987.

Until that point the Duke household had been run on lines of old-fashioned formality. But now, as the old woman became increasingly frail, she began to rely on her paid retainers as though they were family. Despite the singularity of her relationship with Lafferty, at least one Duke biographer regarded him as a genuine friend.

But the indecent haste with which he began spending his new fortune after her death did nothing to quieten the rumours. Lafferty installed a gilt throne in Duke's old room, and cruised the gay bars of Los Angeles wearing snake-skin boots, behind the wheel of a new Cadillac. The gypsy gold hoop earring was discarded for a diamond stud. However much journalists muttered about the goings-on, his Hollywood friends — indulgent of celebrity and wealth — remained loyal, and he was often to be seen about town, escorting ageing stars. His death, the cause of which was not immediately apparent, was thought to have been hastened by his fondness for the bottle.

He remained unmarried.



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NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CONSENT TO CONSTRUCT A GENERATION PLANT AT PHILLIPS PETROLEUM COMPANY LTD UNITED KINGDOM LTD

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GALLANT FIGHT BY H.M.S. JERVIS BAY

The following communiqué was issued by the Admiralty late last night:

It can now be stated with certainty that all except nine of the ships in the convoy attacked by an enemy surface raider on the night of November 5 escaped. The convoy consisted of 38 ships of which one had dropped astern. It will be remembered that the German High Command announced that the whole of this convoy had been destroyed. It is possible that some of the ships still missing may be safe. That nearly three-quarters of this large convoy escaped destruction at the hands of the powerful German raider was due to the high degree of efficiency shown by the captains of the merchant vessels in scattering and making use of smoke and to the very gallant action of H.M.S. Jervis Bay (Acting Captain E.S.F. Pegen, R.N.), which was escorting the convoy. H.M.S. Jervis Bay steered for

ON THIS DAY

November 13, 1940

Thanks to the heroic action of H.M.S. Jervis Bay, an armed merchant cruiser, 29 ships in the convoy reached port safely

the enemy and engaged her with greatly inferior armament, thus enabling the majority of the convoy to make good their escape. H.M.S. Jervis Bay continued to engage the enemy after she had been hit and was burning furiously. Nearly two hours after the beginning of the engagement an explosion was seen to take place on board H.M.S. Jervis Bay, and it is regretted that she must be considered as lost. It is known that 65 of the survivors of H.M.S. Jervis Bay are on board a merchant ship.

A WEST COAST PORT, NOV. 12

The story of the Jervis Bay's heroic fight was told when some of the convoy reached a British port. The captain of one of the British ships said: "The German opened fire almost as soon as she was sighted. She was then seven or eight miles away and concentrated her opening fire on the big liner Rangitiki, which she apparently took for an escort vessel. Her salvos appeared to be from 11in. guns and were very accurate. When the Jervis Bay accepted her challenge and went out to do battle, all the odds were in favour of the raider. The British ship's fate was practically certain, but her officers and crew maintained the best traditions of British seamen and never flinched from the fate that must have overtaken them. The encounter was sharp and fierce. The first few salvos caught the Jervis Bay and set her on fire. In spite of this she kept replying spiritedly with her guns until they were all silenced. Her gallant resistance had permitted us and other vessels in the convoy to escape."

Is a new batch of Chris Evanses coming on stream?

Radio Prankster takes to the air

For grown-ups only: that is how the nanny state has long treated broadcasting. Student stations in America have long held a place on the dial in university towns. But not until February will Britain get its first full-time, student-operated commercial station, Oxygen FM, with programmes made and presented by Oxford students, has just won an eight-year licence from the Radio Authority, thanks apparently to a strong business plan.

This recognition of the youthful appetite, not only for radio but for the business of radio, has been too long coming. While, according to *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, there are 22 university stations around Britain, they mainly go out at low power on medium wave, often for just a month or two a year.

But FM is where they want to be because that broadcasting frequency is better for music. Two other hopefuls are Kick FM at Nottingham Trent University and Shout FM at John Moores University, Liverpool. Both hope, like Oxygen, to win a permanent licence eventually, against other contenders for licences in their area.

One obvious reason for a reluctance to hand students the mike is that they never know what they might say. Indeed, as one of Shout FM's organisers says, he wants the station to be a cutting-edge, innovative station like BBC's Radio 1.

How many Chris Evanses can Britain take? Even one may be too many, to judge from the swelling chorus of Middle England outrage against the paterfamilias irrepressible Evans flings into the ears of the young every weekday morning on Radio 1. His latest effrontery — inviting those female listeners planning to lose their virginity to ring him up and report on their progress — seems calculated to offend driving-to-school mums and the *Daily Mail*.

But Middle England need not worry. Evans is a genius — not that he can do no wrong. It is beyond me why this natural entertainer, blessed with such irresistible bimodal effervescence, has to insult his bosses and his subordinates, boast about his money or even overwork to the point where he cannot control his tongue. I still think he belongs with the all-time greats who have evolved in the curious non-commercial environment of British broadcasting.

It was Channel 4, with its own eccentric structure, which put this red-haired, perpetual-motion creature before our eyes in *The Big Breakfast*. And even this laissez-faire channel has found that it can no longer risk Evans live. It pre-records his Friday lead-in

television show, giving time to blurt out the F words before they hit the air.

But rest assured on commercial radio Evans could never get away with what he does on BBC radio. Only in the self-regulating BBC does he have the latitude to go over the top. The Radio Authority's code of behaviour is far stricter and more specific: "smut, titillation, crudity and sexual stereotyping must be avoided". And the authority has sanctions to hand: fines or loss of licence.

The puritanism of commercial radio is not the fault of the Radio Authority, which is charged by Parliament with keeping a tight rein on commercial radio. Indeed, only in the past few years, with Government-approved expansion of the FM waveband, has the authority been allowed to give out licences in novel forms undreamt of when commercial radio was launched in 1973 under stern regulations which virtually apologised for it being "not the BBC".

Recently, the authority has been giving licences to smaller and smaller patches of turf. So is the British radio universe fairly balanced, all in all? The licence-free-supported BBC has more freedom to tolerate uninhibited speech. Commercial radio is freer to allow private investors to experiment with odd shapes and sizes of audiences. Perhaps, but the BBC's permissiveness would be the more admirable were it not totally dependent on Evans to hold Radio 1's position as the most-listened-to radio station in the country. The oft-rebuked Evans knows, like the head chorister caught smoking, that the powers that be need him and that, to the congregation, he looks like a fundamentally nice boy who is all the more likable for being sometimes naughty.

THINGS to look out for:

- Whether the Chancellor's Budget speech on November 26 includes mention of a future sale of Channel 4.
- Whether the Department of Trade and Industry's draft rules of access to digital subscription television, to be issued later this month, assuage outsiders' anxieties about non-discriminatory access to BSkyB's set-top box.
- Whether the BBC can keep its promise to "use plain language". Last week I failed to spot this vow on page 35 of the BBC's 53-page list of commitments. I am happy to report the good news but worried that the promise applies only to BBC prose addressed to the public. In its international communications, it seems, Birt-speak will survive.



BRENDA MADDOX

It's one for the judge and two for...

IT IS perhaps best that viewers of *The Verdict*, the BBC2 series lifting the lid on the legal profession, reserve judgment on the theme tune. The brains behind the music which accompanies the credits is a rock'n'roll combo of judges and barristers.

Count One and the TICS (courtroom jargon for the first charge on an indictment and cases taken into consideration) features His Honour Judge Wolstenholme on drums and Judge David Wood on keyboards, with support from legal cronies on the North Eastern Circuit.

The band's idea for a Crown Court megamix featuring recorded "samples" of judges barking "Take him down" and "Silence in court" was taken up by the BBC. Sadly the band wasn't asked to play for the actual recording — "it sounded atrocious", says one Beeb insider — but the unanimous verdict at legal shindigs

it has attended has been a definite thumbs-up.

SEAN O'BRIEN, the News of the World reporter who fearlessly confronted Liam Gallagher, the Oasis singer, at the weekend and got a fist in the face for his trouble, should be thankful for small mercies.

O'Brien managed to keep quiet his own far more embarrassing secret. He recently won first prize on *Man O Man*, the programme so tacky that LWT has just axed it. In the show, hosted by the evergreen Chris Tarrant, young men strut about in boxer shorts and undergo a series of insane tests to determine who is the ideal bloke. A roomful of baying women cast their votes and flock round the winner.

O'Brien, then a freelance reporter working for the Sunday Mirror, so impressed the screaming lovelies that he won a £15,000 Harley Davidson and a lot of stick in the newspaper. However, he chose not to share this with the apple like Gallagher whom he confronted with a photograph which showed the singer with a woman who was not his fiancée, Patsy Kensit.

"If Liam had known that he would have probably kicked his head in," a sensitive Oasis camp insider said.



Conran: publicity stunt

Finny, ha ha

WHAT do Sir Terence Conran, a Ford hatchback and a tank full of koi have in common? Answer: a rather bizarre publicity stunt to promote Ford's new baby, the Ka. Visitors to Mezzo, Conran's trendy restaurant in Soho, this week will be greeted by the spectacle of a full-size Ka, converted into an aquarium, and brimming with fish. One of the dinky new cars is also on show in the Conran Shop at Brompton Cross. The innovative stunt was dreamt up by Clayton Healey, the specialist

agency. But there is another link much closer to the Conran home. The mastermind of the merchandising is none other than Sir Terence's son, Sebastian.

NOT everything is shrinking at Express newspapers. While staff and budgets have been reduced to accommodate the new leaner-look seven-day operation, some things are expanding — namely the office of Stephen Grabiner, the executive director.

Staff have been forced to endure a cacophony of bangs and drilling noises as workmen install mahogany surroundings into the huge, triple-aspect, fourth-floor room. Grabiner, credited as being the architect of the drastic changes at Lodgegate House, now holds court looking out over the Thames and St Paul's Cathedral. "His office appears to be growing in direct proportion to the staff shrinking," said an insider at the Express bunker.

Making history

THE American presidential election might have been one of the dullest in history, but it had Internet buffs at fever pitch. CNN managed to break Internet records with an all-



Clinton: dull election

time high of 50 million hits to its website AllPolitics.

Throughout election day, the computer anorak brigade tapped into exit polls for the Senate, House and gubernatorial contests, state by state totals and the full texts of candidates' speeches. As if that wasn't enough, they were at it again the next day accessing photographs of President Clinton and Bob Dole. "Our ability to provide such rich content to so many users makes this a history-making moment for journalism on the Web," a spokesman said.

Every cliché in the ad agency's book

BBC2 screened a most entertaining fly-on-the-wall documentary about advertising last night as part of the *When Rover met BMW* series.

Throughout the half-hour special, which focused on the changed advertising needs of Rover cars in the light of the BMW takeover, just about every advertising cliché was wheeled out.

There was the bow-tied, over-precious creative, embodied in Robin Wright, chief of BMW's agency WCRS. Clad in lime green corduroy, he delighted in the moniker "brand architect" rather than mere adman. Then there was the fancy car. Mr Wright pulled up at Rover's headquarters in his chauffeur-driven, top-of-the-range BMW, complete with his 3545 RW personalised numberplate. The clichés continued with the lavish second home in the country, this one a Northamptonshire farm belonging to another featured advertising executive. But best of all was the ludicrously

ADVERTISING

expensive advertising shoot, costing £750,000, which brought downtown Manhattan to a grinding halt for a day and involved the meticulous selection of one out of 120 actors to wear one out of 40 shirts, 60 ties and four Paul Smith suits. And all that for just 30 seconds.

PROOF that celebrity advertising does not always work. If proof were needed, comes in the shape of the disastrous campaign for the Cable Communications Association, starring Dava French. She was depicted, rather bizarrely, holding onto an enlarged piece of tubing, which was supposed to represent a cable, while sitting on top of a cow and sporting too much lipstick.

A hefty £10 million was spent on national TV to air the commercial but now the CCA has parted with its

director of marketing, dumped the agency responsible for the work and axed the campaign altogether amid dark mutterings from senior operators that the ad was "only average".

AGENCY folk will be gathering for a spot of festive fun at London's Comedy Store on December 9 to watch or star in the industry's popular spoof game show *Whose ad is it anyway?*

Modelled on the Channel 4 Hat Trick Productions programme *Whose line is it anyway?*, the contest similarly obliges participants to indulge in humiliating activities.

Rounds will include the one on writing two-minute slogans using an improbable collection of words, thereby creating the ad most likely to be banned by the TV advertising watchdog, the Broadcast Advertising Clearance Committee.

BELINDA ARCHER



Celebrity ad star Dawn French

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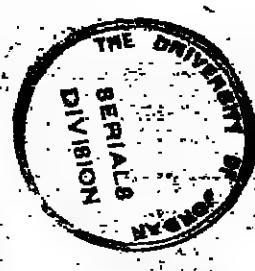
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Belinda Archer reports on the industry's accolade for the ads that part us from our money

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 13 1996

SIB acts to speed up redress for pensions mis-selling

By Robert Miller

THE City's most senior watchdog will today unveil plans to speed up the £4 billion personal pensions redress review by cutting the questions that must be answered before victims can qualify for compensation. Initially they had to answer 200 questions. The number is now being reduced to less than 10.

The Securities and Investments Board (SIB), headed by Sir Andrew Large, has decided to act after becoming concerned at the lack of progress since the review began in 1993. The SIB set a December 31 deadline for the most urgent 500,000 "priority" cases to have been completed and the victims reinstated in their old schemes. If reinstatement was not possible, then the life office is expected to top up personal pension schemes with a comparable sum.

As recently as last week Sir Andrew said: "Two years ago we said that the aim should be a review of most cases by the end of the year. Yet it is now clear that this target will be missed by a mile, with little more than 5 per cent of cases completed and only £50 million of redress offered."

Over the past few months the SIB and the Personal Investment Authority, the watchdog for firms selling direct to the public which has set up a special Pensions Unit to oversee the review, have conducted extensive tests with occupational schemes to decide if investors who were wrongly advised to leave generous work pension schemes for the uncertainty of a private pension plan, will be disadvantaged by the proposed streamlined questionnaire.

The watchdogs claim that very few will suffer because of a speed-up. Consumer bodies, however, are expected to express concern that some will receive less in compensation under the new system. The streamlined SIB questionnaire is designed to help trustees of occupational schemes to locate investors' records and to decide how much compensation would be needed to reinstate that person back to where they would have been had they not been wrongly advised. Many scheme trustees complain they have been overwhelmed with paperwork and requests for information from

life offices and that they are not equipped to deal with the volumes. At least one scheme is believed to have a six-month backlog of work. In a separate move yesterday Denis Brown, a member of the PIA board and a registered insurance broker, resigned his post over a disagreement on professional indemnity insurance cover for independent financial advisers (IFA), which pays out in the event of a claim for pensions mis-selling compensation being made against an adviser. Mr Brown said in his resignation letter to Joe Palmer, PIA

Pennington, page 27

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET		
FTSE 100	2894.3	(+18.8)
London	4,015	
FTSE All share	1528.2	(+7.50)
Nikkei	21206.43	(+141.35)
New York	8263.42	(+7.83)
Dow Jones	731.48	(-0.38)
S&P Composite	731.48	(-0.38)

LIB RATE		
Federal Funds	6 1/4%	(6 1/4%)
Long Bond	100 1/4%	(99 1/4%)
Yield	6.48%	(6.51%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month interbank	6 1/4%	(6 1/4%)
Life long bill	100 1/4%	(100 1/4%)

STERLING		
New York	1.6485	(1.6500)
London	1.6487	(1.6483)
DM	2.4896	(2.4877)
FF	6.3516	(6.3508)
Sfr	2.0756	(2.0751)
Yen	183.19	(183.13)
£ Index	90.6	(90.5)

DOLLAR		
London	1.5800	(1.5820)
DM	5.0778	(5.0852)
FF	1.2533	(1.2548)
Yen	111.43	(111.10)
£ Index	98.1	(98.0)

NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Jan)	822.80	(822.88)

GOLD		
London close	8281.75	(8282.75)

* denotes midday trading price

Nationwide raises rate for million borrowers

By Caroline Meekell and Robert Miller

NATIONWIDE, the UK's second biggest building society, yesterday surprised the housing market by announcing a 0.25 per cent increase in its mortgage rate.

Some see the rise as a climbdown by the society on its pledge to give the benefits of mutualism to members by offering the best value mortgage savings rates.

The society is only the second lender to react to the 0.25 per cent increase in base rates announced earlier this month.

Last week, Birmingham Midshires announced an increase in mortgage rates from 6.99 per cent to 7.24 per cent. Nationwide's variable rate will go up to 6.74 per cent on December 1, affecting a million borrowers.

The society claimed that it had to increase rates so it could give a better deal to savers. Savers with the society outnumber borrowers six to one.

Nationwide's savings rates have been increased by between 0.1 and 0.5 per cent. Others in the industry claimed the society was taking advantage of the fact that as the housing market approaches the quiet "dog days" of winter, it was a perfect time to restore its margins.

On a £50,000 repayment mortgage, the rate increase means the monthly costs will rise from £19 to £20.

Philip Williamson, Nationwide's marketing and commercial director, said: "Over the next few months, many savers with converting building societies who are currently locked into accounts paying less competitive rates of interest will be able to move their investments. I am sure they will be attracted by our excellent savings rates and we



Eye on the ball: Philip de Glanville, centre, England's rugby captain, is a marketing consultant of Druid Group, the management consultancy seeking a market flotation valued at £62.9 million. Also in the line-up are, from left, John Pocock, commercial director; Rob Kimber, financial director; David Tebb, chairman; and David Thompson, managing director

Gas drops action to recover tax

By Oliver August

BRITISH GAS pulled back from an unprecedented legal challenge to the Government demanding the return of £1 billion paid in taxes for offshore gas. A writ had been drawn up in July in an attempt to reclaim alleged overpayments under the 1981 Gas Levy Act. But yesterday a spokesman said: "We will not be pursuing this claim."

In return, the Department of Trade and Industry dropped writs that it was taking out against gas producers to claim back money from them in case British Gas would have to be repaid.

Lord Fraser, the Energy Minister, said: "I am pleased that the matter has been put to rest without the need to resort to litigation. We will not now have to proceed with the action against the producers."

British Gas also announced that Harry Moulson, Transco's managing director, was resigning from the board and relinquishing his post at the pipeline unit for medical reasons. Mr Moulson, 52, is taking extended sick leave and will be replaced temporarily by David Varney, an executive director of British Gas. The search for a replacement will begin immediately.

Norweb Retail jobs to go

By Sarah Cunningham

AT LEAST half of Norweb Retail's 2,800 staff are set to lose their jobs after Kingfisher's purchase of the business from United Utilities for £29 million.

AXA to merge with rival UAP

By Marianne Curphey

AXA and Union des Assurances de Paris (UAP), the two big French insurers, yesterday revealed plans to merge to create the world's second largest insurer — and set off a wave of market speculation in the UK.

The announcement, which followed rumours in France that AXA would make a bid for UAP, was accompanied by a request from the two companies for their shares to be suspended in Paris.

The move will create an insurer with a turnover of £300 billion and a stock market capitalisation of £100 billion. Shares in Sun Life and Provincial Holdings, which is partly owned by UAP and was floated on the UK stock market in June, gained 6 1/2 p to 244 1/2 p, boosted by analysts' belief that the merger would be good for UAP.

Legal & General put up 7 1/2 p to 333 1/2 p amid expectations that the insurance industry would undergo more consolidation and that L&G would be a target. Guardian Royal Exchange rose 1 1/4 p to 259 1/2 p even though Standard & Poor's, the credit rating agency, yesterday graded its life

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Midland Life	37.23	Midland Life	86.47
Nationwide Life	37.80	Halifax Life	87.74
Black Horse Life	46.38	Black Horse Life	101.68
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Home loans from Catholic in vestments

By Robert Miller and Joe Jenkins

CARDINAL Basil Hume, leader of Britain's seven million Roman Catholics, has given his blessing to a pilot scheme for the Catholic Building Society to offer home loans through the Church.

The £27 million Catholic society, one of the smallest but most respected UK societies, will initially offer mortgages, mainly to women and low-income families, through a team of unpaid

volunteer representatives in the Westminster diocese. If successful, the project will be extended to Catholic churches around the country. The society was founded in 1960 to provide mortgages for women and single mothers, by Wing Commander Paddy Byrne, a Second World War Spitfire pilot, and his wife Nona, who is chairman of the society and who still cooks the boardroom lunches for directors. In turn, the directors are expected to visit personally in cases

where difficulties are experienced in keeping up home loan repayments. Francis Higgins, Catholic's managing director, yesterday confirmed that the Catholic Church had given the green light to the society. He said: "Cardinal Hume did express serious concern that while the society and the church have always had a harmonious and happy relationship that mortgages was the cut and thrust commercial world. We have assured him that literature and information on our

mortgages will only be offered on request and not sold and that no volunteer representatives will receive payment or commission. We are putting mutuality to work directly."

THE CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Bank warns of dangers in the rush for EMU

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

THE Bank of England warned EU member states against taking economic risks in trying to meet the timetable for a single currency — emphasising that to do so might threaten economic and political cohesion across Europe.

Instead, Eddie George, the Bank's Governor, urged all EU countries to maintain policies aimed at promoting both macroeconomic discipline and structural flexibility, regardless of whether full monetary union was achieved by all member states.

In a tough speech to the Confederation of British Industry's annual conference,

which closed yesterday in Harrogate, Mr George also forecast that Britain's economy probably could continue to improve. However, he added that the "accelerating upswing" would probably need to be moderated by further interest rate rises so as not to jeopardise the inflation target.

Mr George urged political leaders throughout Europe to take seriously the economic "risks" when they came to make decisions about economic and monetary union.

Doubting that the political leaders who drew up the economic convergence criteria "envisaged the present hectic dash for the line — the chosen calendar deadline", he also warned member states against taking risks to meet it. "I doubt whether they envisaged either that some of the runners might be tempted to take artificial stimulants in order to get there," he said.

Mr George said that Britain's interest in a stable and prosperous Europe. He said that regardless of whether or not EMU takes place — with or without Britain — all member states need to pursue policies directed to monetary stability, fiscal sustainability and structural supply side flexibility, including free trade and market competition.

Simon fears isolation

SIR David Simon, BP chairman, urged Britain to move swiftly to enter European monetary union to avoid isolation and exposure to currency fluctuations (Christine Buckley writes).

He said: "A single currency is a logical extension of the single market of which Mrs Thatcher made us a member in 1985. The market of 370 million is the key to British growth and wealth creation."

However, Sir John Hoskyns, chairman of Burton Group, gave warning of the cost of entering monetary union, which has been calculated at £22 billion for retailers alone.



Eddie George told the CBI Conference that EU member states must take seriously the economic "risks" when they make decisions about EMU

Beckett promises to cut red tape

By Our Industrial Editor

She said Labour had been told by many business leaders that in spite of the Government's claims to push for greater deregulation, in practice its regulatory efforts were being more than matched by fresh regulations.

The move by Labour signals a further advance by the party's leadership into areas traditionally associated with the Conservatives, and an explicit rejection of Labour as a party of over-regulation.

Speaking at a conference breakfast, Margaret Beckett, the Shadow Trade and Industry Secretary, said: "A Labour Government would not seek to tie up industry in red tape. We want to reduce the burden of petty regulation, and we will maintain a deregulatory drive."

She told the CBI: "We want to work with business to see what can be done to manage regulation better." She added that good regulation could be a "spur, not a deterrent". Mrs Beckett made it clear that Labour did not disagree with

everything the Conservatives had done towards business, especially in the last two or three years, mentioning specifically Business Links, the Technology Foresight programme, modern apprenticeships and the business-led

Training and Enterprise Council. A Labour government, she said, would seek to build on such moves — many of which had originally been suggested by Labour.

Insisting there were large areas of agreement between new Labour and business, Mrs Beckett made a strong case for manufacturing industry. She said: "Manufacturing must always be the basis for our wealth."

She also called on the Government to abandon its prejudices and join Europe in discussing social issues, as a new Labour government would do by signing the European social charter, and she forecast that whatever party was in power, eventually it would sign up.

Clarke urged to show restraint

BUSINESS leaders yesterday urged Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, to reject calls for tax cuts in order to fuel the "feel-good" factor ahead of the election (Philip Bassett writes).

The CBI called on the Chancellor to exercise fiscal restraint in the Budget this month and to produce measures aimed at encouraging investment and repairing public finances.

time of the CBI's last conference a year ago had now been resolved — mainly favourably.

Andrew Burton, chairman of Barclays Bank and the CBI's economic affairs committee, gave warning that significant personal tax cuts would present as many risks to the economy as opportunities. "I am sure the Chancellor is more sensible than to listen to those calling for significant tax cuts in order to fuel a greater 'feel-good' factor, when it is already there."

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She also called on the Government to abandon its prejudices and join Europe in discussing social issues, as a new Labour government would do by signing the European social charter, and she forecast that whatever party was in power, eventually it would sign up.

Irish cast eyes over Far East

FROM EILEEN McCABE IN DUBLIN

DCC, the industrial holding company based in the Irish Republic, is targeting the Far East, particularly Japan, Singapore and China, for expansion. Jim Flavin, chief executive, said yesterday.

By a 14.7 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £111 million before exceptional gains, DCC plans to focus on forging links for its computer services sector and on small acquisitions in its healthcare division.

"The Far East is where the action is and we are laying down seeds and forming alliances to make sure we take advantage of that," Mr Flavin said at the announcement of the company's interim results.

The sale of its share in Heitons, the Irish building provider, and the restructuring of its stake in Allied Foods together accounted for an exceptional gain in the first half of £14.5 million. Including the exceptional gain, profits jumped 54 per cent to

almost £15.7 million, with earnings per share of 14.6p. Adjusted earnings per share were up 14 per cent to 10.13p.

Three of the company's four divisions recorded strong growth with DCC Healthcare notching up a 194 per cent increase in operating profit to £12.8 million. That improvement was largely down to the inclusion of Days Medical Aids, the British mobility products company acquired last November.

But profits at DCC Sercom, the computer services division, dropped 21 per cent to £12.7 million in the first half because of a dramatic decline in the market for printed computer documentation.

Mr Flavin said DCC had spent £117.4 million on acquisitions in the first half and had now almost completed the planned buyout of minority interests in group companies.

DCC declared a 12 per cent rise in the interim dividend to 3.04p, payable on January 9.

Labour pledges to establish new pensions advisory body

By Robert Miller

AN INCOMING Labour government will make the creation of an independent pensions body to advise about the state of retirement provision a top priority, John Denham, the party's pensions spokesman, told a conference in London yesterday.

Mr Denham, addressing the National Association of Pension Funds, said that the new body would be "independent, authoritative, properly representing the interests of employers, employees, pension providers, pensioners and consumers".

To encourage the pensions industry to provide solutions as to how a Labour government might launch a second

pension so that people make better provision for their retirement, such as "stakeholder pensions" or using the existing structure of the state earnings related pension scheme for a "citizenship pension", Mr Denham proposed a new "investors in pensions" award.

He added that such an award would become a sought after commendation for pension schemes. "It would give a proper recognition of those who set the highest standards in pension provision and set a benchmark against which employers, employees and trustees could measure the quality of their own scheme."

Speaking for the Government, Lord Mackay of

Ardbreckish, the Social Security Minister, offered an olive branch to NAPP delegates over the complex rules and regulations of the Pensions Act, which comes into full force in April.

He said: "I am very conscious that some of the legislation requires you to look at several Acts and regulations. So I believe that we shall need to consider at what stage this legislation can be consolidated and brought together... My challenge is 'what are you prepared to do to simplify pensions?'"

He added: "Focus on that and then let us talk about what might be possible so that together we can build on the

unique strengths of the UK pension system. I can promise to look constructively at what we can back away."

Meanwhile, John Hayes, chairman of the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority, the new statutory watchdog, spoke out for the first time on the duties of "whistleblowers".

He said that the authority wanted to encourage the reporting of breaches large and small in a spirit that said it was not the end of the world to confess to a breach.

He added: "What is important in most cases in the early days is putting it right, doing so in a reasonable time, and sticking to that time."

Clubhaus pairs with Golf Fund

By Alasdair Murray

CLUBHAUS, the golf course company, is expanding into the Midlands through an agreed £12.65 million takeover of Golf Fund that owns two courses in Warwickshire and Staffordshire. The Warwickshire course, at Leek Woodton, has 45 holes and development permission for a 170-bedroom hotel, while the Seedy Mill course, at Lichfield, has 27 holes.

Robert Bourne, chief executive of Clubhaus, said the company aimed to improve operating margins at the two courses through greater purchasing power and cross-selling of facilities.

Clubhaus, which emerged from Ex-Lands earlier this year, is chaired by Alexander Baron von Spoercken, has Charlie Parker as finance director, and owns four UK courses in the South East. There are also five in Europe.

David Lloyd, the former tennis player, recently joined the board as non-executive director to advise on making facilities more attractive to families.

Clubhaus is offering 66.46 shares for every 100 Golf Fund. There is a cash and shares alternative of 44.3 Clubhaus shares plus £7.50 cash and £7.50 in nominal unsecured loan stock for every 100 Golf Fund shares.



Robert Bourne, left, Guy Buckley, development director, Charlie Parker and Baron von Spoercken

Balance warning to Woolwich savers

By Caroline Merrell

SAVERS with the Woolwich Building Society were urged to make sure they have at least £100 in their qualifying accounts at midnight on December 31 to make sure they do not miss out on their flotation windfall.

About 3.5 million savers and borrowers are in line for the free shares, which could average out at £1,000 a person, when the society converts to a bank and floats on the stock market next year.

The Woolwich said that, in order to be entitled to the basic distribution of shares, likely to

be worth £750, members must be eligible to vote at the special general meeting in February.

John Stewart, Woolwich group chief executive, said: "We have generally advised qualifying investing members to keep a minimum balance of £100. But it is important that members have advance notice of the proposed date for determining eligibility to vote."

Members also needed to have had £100 in an account on December 31, last year, to qualify.

FOUR RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.19	2.23
Austria S	13.52	13.52
Belgium F	23.71	23.71
Canada C	2.307	2.347
Cyprus C	0.785	0.780
Denmark K	10.04	9.24
Finland M	8.01	7.38
France F	8.75	8.08
Germany D	2.32	2.41
Greece L	405	380
Hong Kong S	13.86	12.30
Ireland P	115	95
Ireland P	1.05	0.97
Italy L	3.54	4.59
Japan Y	187.80	181.30
Malta M	0.53	0.570
Netherlands G	2.14	2.084
New Zealand \$	2.48	2.29
Norway N	10.91	10.11
Portugal E	200.50	242.00
S Africa R	0.32	0.32
Spain P	214.48	201.00
Sweden K	11.49	10.99
Switzerland F	2.00	2.02
Turkey L	1069.20	1020.00
USA \$	1.748	1.618

Notes for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to bank's cheque. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Mutual friends, page 29

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

News Corp raises profits by 7%

THE News Corporation, parent company of *The Times*, raised after-tax profits before abnormal items 7 per cent to \$224 million in the three months to September 30 on revenues up 7 per cent to \$2.5 billion from the first quarter of last year. Contributing to growth was the box office success of *Independence Day* and marked gains in profitability in British newspapers and American publishing.

Independence Day has grossed more than \$670 million around the world, making it the third highest grossing film in box office history. The film contributed to a 150 per cent gain in operating profits at Fox Filmed Entertainment. British newspaper operations raised operating profits 18 per cent on the first quarter of last year. News Corp said that results at *The Times* were particularly robust as it continued to make circulation gains. The average daily sale in September topped 810,000, a 19 per cent gain compared with a year ago, which has contributed to a 30 per cent rise in advertising revenues.

Sedgwick resilient

SEDGWICK, the insurance broker, lifted pre-tax profits 5 per cent to £90.4 million from £76.5 million in the first nine months of the year. Brokerage and fees at £691 million and expenses at £640 million both increased 3 per cent. Sax Riley, chief executive, said market conditions had been demanding but Sedgwick's businesses had been resilient. He added: "The industry-wide reduction in insurance rating levels affected most parts of our business. In the UK there has been a particularly severe downturn in rates."

Yates to raise £7.5m

YATES Brothers Wine Lodges, the drinks retailer, is raising £7.5 million through a rights issue to fund expansion. The company is placing the shares, equivalent to 5 per cent of the enlarged total capital, at 35p with institutional investors. Dealings are expected to commence on Friday. The new shares will also receive the interim dividend of 1.44p. Existing shares rose to close at 392.5p. Yates recently failed in its attempt to acquire Tom Cole, the pub company, which Rank ultimately purchased for £95.6 million.

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Notice of Interest Rates for Businesses,
Charities and Societies effective
from 13th November, 1996

	gross interest compounded rate p.a.	gross annual rate
£100,000+	3.375%	3.41%
£25,000-£99,999	3.00%	3.03%
£10,000-£24,999	2.375%	2.39%

The gross interest rate is before deduction of tax. The gross compounded annual rate is the rate where gross interest payments are retained on the account during the year. Interest rates are subject to variation.



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COUTTS GROUP IS THE GLOBAL PRIVATE BANKING SERVICES GROUP

□ Tax reasons against expensive demerger □ SIB to accelerate misselling review □ Nationwide's rapid rate reversal

Allied sums that fail to add up

□ SO two and two does not add up to five after all, even if this negative conclusion is not going to be reflected in the fees of the various advisers who worked for months on the possible demerger of Allied Domecq.

There were still optimists yesterday who hoped that next year, or the year after, or the year after that might see the long-awaited split between drinks brands and the ill-matched retail operations. Fair enough, the market must trade on something, and that rumour has fuelled enough business since the appointment of Sir Christopher Hogg as chairman this spring. But Sir Christopher, even though he may have engineered a similar split at Courtaulds, is a man who means what he says, and he described such an exercise at Allied as an "expensive distraction".

The reasons are various but compelling. The first problem is tax. Retailing would have most of its business in Britain through Allied's 4,000-strong pub chains. The drinks side would operate worldwide, with a relatively limited turnover within these shores. The result would be a mass of advanced corporation tax arising within the spirits business that could not, as now, be relieved by UK earnings.

The second is the sheer cost of the exercise, running into hundreds of millions, including the

tax bill and those advisers' fees. Third, there is some weird kind of synergy, if a limited one, between the various businesses, even if no one in their right mind would set out from scratch to create a group taking in spirits, franchised ice cream and doughnut bars and local bouquiers.

The best reason not to demerge is that there is enough to do without spending valuable time elsewhere. Unfortunately the decision throws into sharp relief the weaknesses of those core businesses. The pubs are the best of the lot, managing an underlying profits rise of 5 per cent on turnover up 2 per cent. Allied's chains may not be the most original, either concepts pirated from elsewhere, as with the Wacky Warehouse kiddie hell-holes, or bought in from outside like the Fridin pubs, but the group knows how to run them.

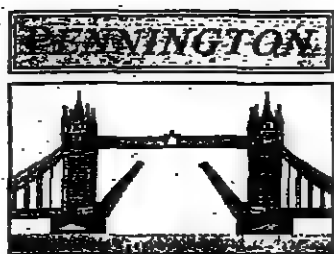
The spirits operation, like all the other big drinks groups, has suffered from worldwide destocking and still has too many brands. But Allied has the added disadvantages of being, in virtually every market and every drinks sector, the second biggest

brand, and of its heavy exposure to difficult trading areas such as Mexico and Spain through the ill-fated purchase in 1994 of Domecq.

These factors, and the dire state of the brewing operation since it was merged with Carlsberg, explain why the share price over the past four years has lost half its value relative to the FTSE All-Share Index, while a yield on the dividends of 6.6 per cent demonstrates the City's scepticism. The exit from brewing is now achieved and demerger speculation largely laid to rest, but it is going to be a long, slow slog from here.

Geriatric pace of pensions inquiry

□ IT has been said here before, and every delay makes it all the more true: the personal pensions misselling review has become a national scandal. Yes, it is complex and yes, sterling efforts have been made by some life offices, notably Barclays Life, to expedite matters. But three years after the Securities and Investments



Board first formally flagged its concerns over the scale of misselling, only £50 million or so has been paid in compensation to those who lost out.

Set this against an expected compensation bill of between £25 and £3 billion, to which you can add a further £1 billion to cover the costs of identifying those who suffered and putting this right. How can the public, urged by politicians across the political spectrum to make more provision for their own retirement, be expected to have any faith in the pensions industry with the misselling review still so far from being resolved? Insurance companies, which should play a leading role in making sure people are well

provided for in retirement, have instead been revealed as behaving like used car salesmen. They have shown scant heed for those whose financial futures they were jeopardising.

Regulators have a central role to play in restoring public confidence. Inro, the regulator for fund managers, has made firm and effective moves in this direction. It recently fined four members well over £400,000 for rule breaches in relation to pension misselling. By contrast, fellow watchdog the Personal Investment Authority, on whom the biggest part of the review falls, has fined 29 firms a total of just £16,500 for late filing or failure to file details of how their own reviews were progressing.

The SIB, the *capo di tutti capi* among regulators, will today reveal its plans for accelerating the whole mess. Perhaps now is the time to get seriously tough, and for the PIA to take a leaf out of Inro's book. As one senior Inro source put it yesterday: "Firms left to their own devices may be tempted to be concerned more with their bottom line than investors' interests. The regu-

lators' job is to restore the balance to their thinking, and the possibility of discipline is very effective." Quite.

Marginalised by margins

□ SO much for building societies' so-called reward schemes, which aim to spread the benefits of staying mutual among savers and borrowers rather than handing out large amounts of cash or shares to both.

The Nationwide's decision to raise mortgage and savings rates follows the less well-noted rise by the Birmingham Midshires last week. Both societies have sworn their allegiance to mutuality, and the Nationwide's reward programme is designed to prove this commitment. But the need to increase rates now shows the extent that the margins of the Nationwide are being hit by the scheme, intended to match the value of the windfalls being paid by those other societies that are going to market and converting more with their bottom line than investors' interests. The regu-

lators' job is to restore the balance to their thinking, and the possibility of discipline is very effective." Quite.

Windfall whingers

□ THERE was a Peter Sellers film some years ago in which the actor played a well-meaning vicar who gave food away to the deserving poor. The result was squabbling among the needy over just who got what. All too cynical, except that every building society handing out free cash or shares to its members, the extent being the Alliance & Leicester, seems to have attracted a ginger group either after more freebies or demanding that others should get less.

Allied Domecq rules out split as wine and spirits decline

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

ALLIED DOMEQ, the food and drinks business, ruled out a demerger of its spirits business in the short term, saying it would instead concentrate on improving its operating performance (see Pennington, this page).

The company also disappointed the City with lacklustre full-year results and its shares fell 14p to 454p.

Profit before tax, excluding exceptional charges, fell 11 per cent to £575 million, while turnover slipped back slightly to £4.54 billion.

Sir Christopher Hogg, chairman, said the company

had examined the demerger issue but had decided that the resulting taxation costs were too high. He added there was no obvious shareholder value to be unlocked and said there were some synergies between the businesses. But the company said it would not rule out a demerger at some point, once the operating performance had improved.

The fall in overall profits was mainly caused by a 14 per cent decline in profits in the wine and spirit division to £419 million. The company said it had been forced to remove 580,000 cases of spirits

from the US market due to overstocking.

Turnover fell 5 per cent to £2.7 billion as the company suffered a 5 per cent fall in volumes in the Americas, excluding Mexico, and a 1 per cent fall in Europe.

Allied has improved stocking policies and the destocking phase is now largely complete. The company hopes to make cautious price rises and is aiming to improve its brand marketing.

The retailing division, which includes pubs and fast-food outlets, increased operating profits 4 per cent to £223

million. The strongest performance came in the managed pub division — which owns brands such as Fridin, Scruffy Murphy and Wacky Warehouse — where profits rose 13 per cent to £25 million.

Profits at Victoria Wine, the off-licence chain, fell £1 million to £17 million, while franchising profits from the Baskin-Robbins and Dunkin' Donuts brands, fell 8 per cent.

Allied said it was aiming to continue the expansion of its branded pubs and would concentrate on further cost reductions. Exceptional charges totalled £311 million with the

biggest cost being a book value write-off after the £205 million sale of the company's 50 per cent stake in Carlsberg-Tetley to Bass.

Allied does not anticipate any more heavy restructuring costs and is on track to cut operating costs by £35 million by the end of 1998.

The total dividend is held at 23.9p. Allied hopes to improve the dividend cover, which stands at 1.4 times, in the near future. A final dividend of 14.15p is payable on February 21.

City Diary, page 29

Overstocking hits Eurodis expectations

SHARES of Eurodis Electron, the electronic components distributor formed from a merger last year, fell 15p to 138p after the company gave warning that it is unlikely to improve profits this year (Paul Durman writes).

Although sales volumes remain "relatively stable", excess stocks of components have made it difficult to increase prices, putting pressure on profit margins.

Robert Leigh, chairman, said that the company is overstocked by about £2 million, and it could be a number of months before demand catches up with supply.

GA falls behind at 9-month stage

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

GENERAL ACCIDENT, the composite insurance company, suffered a fall in operating profits in the first nine months of the year but said improved life results had limited the damage.

Despite the 11 per cent drop in profit from £351 million to £311 million, GA shares rose 11p to 718p. The insurer said that it had suffered weather losses of £58 million mainly because of the winter storms in the US earlier this year. The total worldwide underwriting deficit was £166 million.

However, there were good results from UK life and pensions sales after the integration of Provident Mutual,

the mutual life insurer that GA bought in January.

Pension sales in the UK rose to £63.7 million from £22.2 million in the third quarter and now account for nearly half of GA Life's new business.

The integration of Provident Mutual is "largely complete" and the business contributed £11 million net of reorganisation costs to group profits.

GA had thought a projected £25 million full-year contribution from Provident Mutual would be eaten up by the restructuring charges. However, analysts now expect the acquisition to contribute well over £30 million to the full-year profits.

Rate rise threat to businesses

Higher interest rates could trigger a fresh round of receiverships and administrations, according to Deloitte & Touche, the accountant. Businesses experiencing financial difficulties will come under increasing pressure, and the downward trend in insolvency appointments could slow or even reverse. Appointments in October were 43 per cent lower than in the same period last year. There were 120 appointments compared with 213 in October 1995.

Cortec's delay

Shares of Cortec International continued their slide yesterday when the biotechnology company signalled a three-month delay on one of its lead products, a capsule form of a treatment for osteoporosis, the brittle bone disease. The shares fell 14p to 191p.

Last orders

Mark McQuater has resigned as managing director of JDWetherspoon, the pub company, to pursue other business interests. The company said the management board would assume responsibility for day-to-day operational issues. Shares in the company fell 10p to £12.15.

Trust scheme

Mercury European Private Trust (MEPT) aims to reduce the discount of 15 per cent at which it is trading to between 8 and 10 per cent, depending on market conditions next year. It aims to achieve this through its share buyback scheme and a direct marketing campaign.



Martin Jay, Vesper's chief executive, saw a buoyant first half

Middle East deals lift Vosper 11%

By OLIVER AUGUST

VOSPER Thornycroft, the warship builder, increased half-year profits 11 per cent on the back of three Middle East export deals while also branching out further into facilities management.

Saudi Arabia has accepted delivery of seven Minehunter ships equipped with Vosper sonar, and the second of the East Strike Craft for Qatar in the Gulf has reached its destination. An Omani order for Corvette ships is due to be completed later this month.

Pre-tax profits for the six months to September 30 rose from £11.4 million to £12.7 million. Earnings per share were up 8 per cent to 25.8p and the interim dividend was lifted 10 per cent to 7.5p.

More than a third of turnover now comes from activities independent of warship contracts. In the first half, Vosper finalised a five-year facilities management contract with GCHQ and signed a 15-year deal with the Royal Navy to maintain its training sites.

Times, page 28

CSC grows and seeks £204m

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

CAPITAL Shopping Centres, one of Britain's largest retail property companies, plans to raise £204 million through a rights issue to support its investment programme. It has also upgraded significantly its net asset value for the second time in three months.

The company said yesterday that open market valuations of its eight completed shopping centres — including Lakeside, Thurrock, and the MetroCentre, Gateshead —

gave a net asset value of £1.46 billion. This is equivalent to 293p a share, 20p higher than at the last upgrading in August. It said rental growth has been "significantly above average in the retail property market."

CSC will issue one 6 1/2 per cent subordinated convertible 100p bond for every two 50p CSC ordinary shares held. The bonds are convertible after January 22, 1997 and before December 31, 2006 into

ordinary CSC shares at 370p. CSC said the issue fits its strategy of "matching the holding of long-term assets with equity capital and long term fixed rate financing". This leaves development and acquisitions to be financed by medium-term bank financing.

CSC said its latest £250 million shopping centre, at Broadland Park, Glasgow, will open in the spring of 1999.

Times, page 28

Business Post ahead

PAN-EUROPEAN success helped Business Post, the UK-based business mail company, to lift its taxable profits 50 per cent to £7.7 million in the six months to September 30 (Fraser Nelson writes).

The company, which started delivering to European businesses via the Channel Tunnel last year, said demand had risen sharply. Torquil Montague-Johnstone, finance director,

said it would now extend its full worldwide service.

The company will not replace Michael Kane, who is resigning as chief executive in March. Mick Jones has been promoted from head of operations to managing director.

Business Post shares rose 6p to 467p. Earnings were 10.2p a share (7.9p). The interim dividend rises to 3.6p (3p), payable on January 3.

GA General Accident

STRONG THIRD-QUARTER PERFORMANCE

9-MONTHS' RESULTS			
	9 MONTHS TO 30.9.96 ESTIMATE	9 MONTHS TO 30.9.95 ESTIMATE	£M
General Premiums	3,447	3,302	
Life Premiums	1,340	1,131	
Underwriting Result	(166)	(62)	
Net Investment Income	409	372	
Life Profits	77	53	
Operating Profit before Taxation	311	351	
Profit attributable to Ordinary Shareholders	346	292	
Operating Earnings per Ordinary Share	44.0p	52.3p	

- Operating pre-tax profit of £311m follows a profit in the third quarter up 23% at £117m.
- Strong growth in investment earnings.
- Worldwide underwriting deficit of £166m includes increased severe weather losses of £58m.
- Underwriting profit achieved in the UK.
- Good third-quarter performance in the United States.
- Strong performances in New Zealand and Asia.
- Further excellent progress in the profitability of UK life and pensions sales.
- Current solvency margin 79%. Net assets per ordinary share 690p.

Group Chief Executive Bob Scott comments:

"A positive underlying performance in all our major business units worldwide has continued during the third quarter and we would expect this trend to be maintained."

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Dominion may be near to East Midlands deal

FINANCIAL advisers to Dominion Resources were reckoned to be burning the midnight oil last night in an attempt to pave the way for an agreed bid for East Midlands Electricity.

Word from the Square Mile suggests a deal may be close with the US power generator ready to offer between 650p and 660p a share, provided it gets the backing of the East Midlands board. Such terms would value the regional electricity company at £1.28 billion.

Shares of East Midlands again crept higher yesterday, ending 7½p up at 61½p, in anticipation of the terms from Dominion, or the appearance of a second bidder.

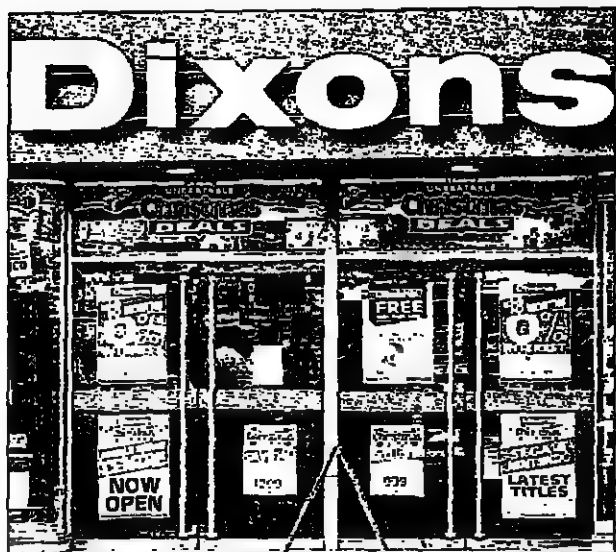
Dominion was forced to disclose its hand last week after a sharp rise in the East Midlands share price, but it said it would not be paying much above 600p a share.

Elsewhere, a strong performance overnight on Wall Street and further gains among government securities put equities in good stead. In the event the FT-SE 100 index closed near its best of the day with a rise of 19.9 at 3,934.3, although turnover remained thin with only 657 million shares changing hands.

A stock shortage continued to power Dixons sharply higher, with the price adding 18½p to 560p as 2.1 million shares changed hands. A survey from the British Retail Consortium said high street sales had continued to grow during September, with those of electrical goods particularly promising in the run-up to Christmas. Cazenove is reckoned to have further cheered investors by raising its profit forecast. UBS and Warburg are also reckoned to be buyers of Dixons and only last week NatWest Securities increased its rating to "buy".

Also in the retail sector, Blacks Leisure rose 10p to 325p. Body Shop 3p to 211½p. Hamleys 14½p to 430½p. Next 6p to 540p. The Rank 3p to 187p. But Burton slipped 3p to 144½p as rumours persisted it might bid for House of Fraser, 4p firmer at 136½p. Signet Group was steady at 25½p as Salomon Brothers emerged as a holder of nine million shares, or 3.09 per cent.

The proposed merger between AXA Midland and UAP focused attention on Sun Life, up 6½p to 244½p. Cookson shrugged off recent weakness



Sales of electrical goods are promising in the Christmas run-up

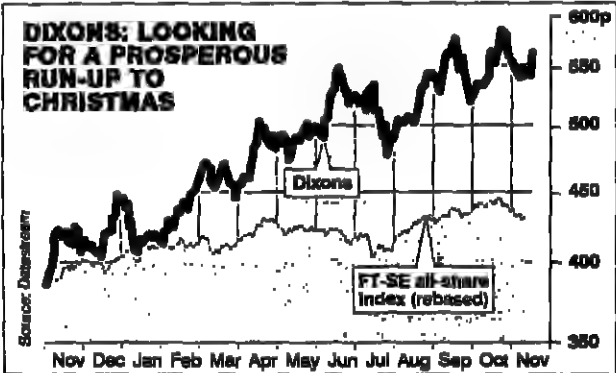
to score a 10p rise at 222½p. Overnight the group reported a sharp increase in its full-year sales. But RTZ fell 14p to 912½p, reflecting a profits downgrade by Kleinwort Benson, the broker.

Thistle Hotels, a newcomer, finished 3p better at 165½p after some positive comments from Merrill Lynch, the broker. Reckitt & Coleman dipped

British Airways climbed 10p to 592p as 5 million shares were traded. City speculators expect the Government to approve the proposed link-up with American Airlines. It will give the two companies the lion's share of the north transatlantic market and, brokers say, boost the share price even further.

7p to 705p as a line of 2.2 million shares went through the market. SBC Warburg placed them with institutions at 706p as part of a delayed trade.

Allied Domecq fell a further 13p to 454p after it finally put paid to speculation that it intended to demerge its spirits and retail operations. Sir Christopher Hogg, chairman, said he wanted to develop the



of the continuing difficult trading conditions being experienced by the insurance market. The figures were also underpinned by a jump in its life and pensions business. The shares responded with a rise of 10½p to 718½p.

But there was a lukewarm response to third-quarter figures from Sedgwick, the insurance broker, with the price adding 1p to 124p. The modest rise in profits was better than the City had been going for, but brokers remain unexcited about its prospects.

Evidence of a strong order book at Vosper Thornycroft failed to cut much ice with the market as the price firmed 1p to 836p. Profits in the first six months of the year grew from £11.4 million to £12.7 million.

A profits warning left Eurodis Electronics nursing a fall of 15½p to 138½p. The group says interim figures will fail to match those achieved during the corresponding period last year.

Demand remained sluggish with destocking responsible for much of the group's difficulty.

The current strength of the pound looks like being good news for Eurocamp, the camping holiday specialist, where the price firmed 3p to 189p. The group said that there had been a surge in late bookings.

The announcement that Mark McQuarrie had resigned as managing director of JD Wetherspoon, the pub chain, to pursue other interests led the shares 10p easier at £12.15.

GIFT-EDGED: The market retreated after a firm start as sellers emerged at the higher levels. Volumes generally remained at low ebb with investors reluctant to open fresh positions before today's inflation numbers.

In the futures pit, the December series of the long gilt saw its lead cut to just five ticks at £109½ as the total number of contracts completed rose to 50,000.

In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 also rose nine ticks to £101½, while among shorter dated issues, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was ¼p firmer at £102½.

NEW YORK: Wall Street stocks posted only modest gains at midday, with the Dow Jones industrial average shaking off an earlier bout of profit-taking after a four-day bull run. The index was up 7.33 points to 6,263.43.

MAJOR INDEXES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 6263.43 (+7.33)
S&P Composite 731.48 (+0.39)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 21206.41 (+34.35)
Hang Seng 12806.21 (+34.45)

Amsterdam:
EEX Index 597.59 (+0.49)

Sydney:
All Ordinaries 2343.5 (+14.4)

Frankfurt:
DAX 2734.30 (+5.96)

Singapore:
Straits 2128.17 (+10.94)

Brussels:
General 10041.89 (+32.18)

Paris:
CAC-40 2228.13 (+23.93)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 806.40 (+1.50)

London:
FT 100 2753.1 (+0.77)
FT 100 2753.1 (+0.77)
FTSE Mid 250 4048.6 (+0.9)
FTSE 250 1963.5 (+0.8)
FTSE Europe 100 1793.66 (+7.11)
FT All-Share 1930.79 (+7.08)
FT Non Financials 2027.1 (+7.0)
FT Financials 1152.42 (+0.04)
FT Govt Secs 93.84 (+0.11)
Bespoke 334.9

SEAQ Volume 692.3m
USM (Daxstrom) 201.31 (+0.08)
USM 1.6667 (+0.0001)
German Mark 2.4642 (+0.0012)
Exchange Index 90.6 (+0.1)
Bank of England official close (40p)
CISX 92.09 (+1.28)
ESX 1.350
RPI 153.8 Sep (2.1%) Jan 1997-100
RPIX 153.6 Sep (2.0%) Jan 1997-100

Beaufort (3) 4 ...
Bechtel 172 ...
Brands Hatch Ltd 159 ...
Brit Allco 164 ...
Charles Taylor 164 ...
Crisp Securities (3) 4 ...
Deep Sea Leisure 164 ...
Felix Russian Frac 605 ...
Geo Interactive Ltd 96 ...
Healthcare Reform 99 ...
Jardiner Interiors 122 ...
John David Sports 299 ...
Lotus Road (7) 680 ...
Majestic Wine 204 ...
Mears Group 114 ...
Mondas (7) 90 ...
Oriental Restaurant 230 ...
Sov Highland Hides 137 ...
Uffa Electronics 304 ...

AG Holdings n/p 12 ...
Bridport-Gandy n/p 3 ...
Capital Ind n/p (17) 5 ...
European Life n/p 13 ...
Fertis Foods n/p (7) 74 ...
Springdale n/p 82 ...

RISER:
Bloomberg Int 575p (+48p)
Adam & Harvey 310p (+20p)
London Club 325p (+18p)
Olympic 585p (+18p)
Slipcase Ltd 325p (+10p)
GLS 585p (+12p)
Outcome & Little 775p (+15p)
Smiths Ind 785p (+14p)
B Airways 352p (+10p)
Debut 685p (+10p)
ICI 775p (+12p)

FALLS:
Shield Dig 125p (-14p)
Concorde 191p (-14p)
Capital Radio 552p (-25p)
Allied Dom 454p (-14p)
Paton 397p (-10p)
Reid Pat 685p (-10p)
De La Rue 575p (-10p)
Scotia 585p (-10p)

Closing Prices Page 31

FTSE 100
Previous open interest 63041
FTSE 250
Previous open interest 4174
Three Month Sterling
Previous open interest 12182

Three Mth Euro Yen
Previous open interest 113014
Long Gilt
Previous open interest 14082
Japanese Govt Bond
Previous open interest 9879

German Govt Bond
Previous open interest 28019
Three Month ECU
Previous open interest 2718
Euro Swiss Franc
Previous open interest 42236
Italian Govt Bond
Previous open interest 9879

Base Rates Clearing Banks 6 Finance Rate 6
Discount Market London Overnight high 6 1/2
Treasury Bills (Discount) 2 mth 5 1/2, 3 mth 5 1/2, 6 mth 5 1/2, 12 mth 5 1/2

Prime Bank Bills (Discount) 2 mth 5 1/2, 3 mth 5 1/2, 6 mth 5 1/2, 12 mth 5 1/2

Local Authority Deposits
Sterling CDs 5.25
Building Society CDs 5.25

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Current 7 day 1 mth 3 mth 6 mth 12 mth

Dollar 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2

Deutsche Mark 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2

French Franc 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2

Swiss Franc 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2

Yen 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2 5 1/2

Gold/Precious Metals (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Gold \$381.60-391.60 Close \$381.50 High \$382.10 Low \$381.00 PM: \$381.50

Kruggerand: \$381.00-391.00 Close \$381.00 High \$382.10 Low \$381.00 PM: \$381.50

Platinum: \$388.00-423.50 Silver \$4.87-5.05 Palladium \$118.25-121.70

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Min Rates for November 12 Range Close 1 month 3 months

Amsterdam 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Brussels 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Frankfurt 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

London 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Paris 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Switzerland 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Yen 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Gold/Precious Metals (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Gold \$381.60-391.60 Close \$381.50 High \$382.10 Low \$381.00 PM: \$381.50

Kruggerand: \$381.00-391.00 Close \$381.00 High \$382.10 Low \$381.00 PM: \$381.50

Platinum: \$388.00-423.50 Silver \$4.87-5.05 Palladium \$118.25-121.70

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Min Rates for November 12 Range Close 1 month 3 months

Amsterdam 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Brussels 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Frankfurt 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

London 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Paris 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

Switzerland 2.7450-2.7711 2.7470-2.7499 1 1/2-1 3/4 3 1/2-3 3/4

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UNIVERSITY

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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Hand in hand at Ronson

HOWARD HODGSON raised eyebrows yesterday, after Christine Pickles was appointed acting finance director at Ronson, where the former funeral director holds sway.

Miss Pickles, who moves into David Moffatt's seat, enjoys a more than a professional relationship with Mr Hodgson. "It's the sort of thing that happens in offices," says James Roe, Ronson's chairman. "It's got nothing to do with the business," he insists. Mr Roe, who is also standing down because of pressure of work, is to be replaced by company doctor Shaun Dowling. A former Guinness executive, Mr Dowling will be in a good position to keep an eye on the love birds.

On the ball

SAVE A PROSPER, sponsor of the rugby internationals at Twickenham, has picked the winners in the competition run by the City Diary to name the sponsor and the new England captain. Readers Chris Mallows, of Hordham, West Sussex; David Lovenbury, of Orrell Park, Liverpool; and Adam Willmott, of Fulham, west London, all plumped for Philip de Glanville as captain and win tickets for the match between England and Italy. In spite of a dozen entries from Nicholas Dargan, a management accountant at Exco, not one of his numerous entries was picked. Next time Nick, don't just photocopy the same entry, at least try different handwriting.



"I was looking forward to a 48-hour week"

Gins up

IN the face of falling profits at Allied Domecq, Sir Christopher Hogg and Tony Hales went to the cinema last night, with the Queen. The chairman and chief executive were at the Royal premiere of *True Blue*. As sponsors of the University Boat Race since the American money in 1987, Beecham was supplying martini at the star-studded premiere.

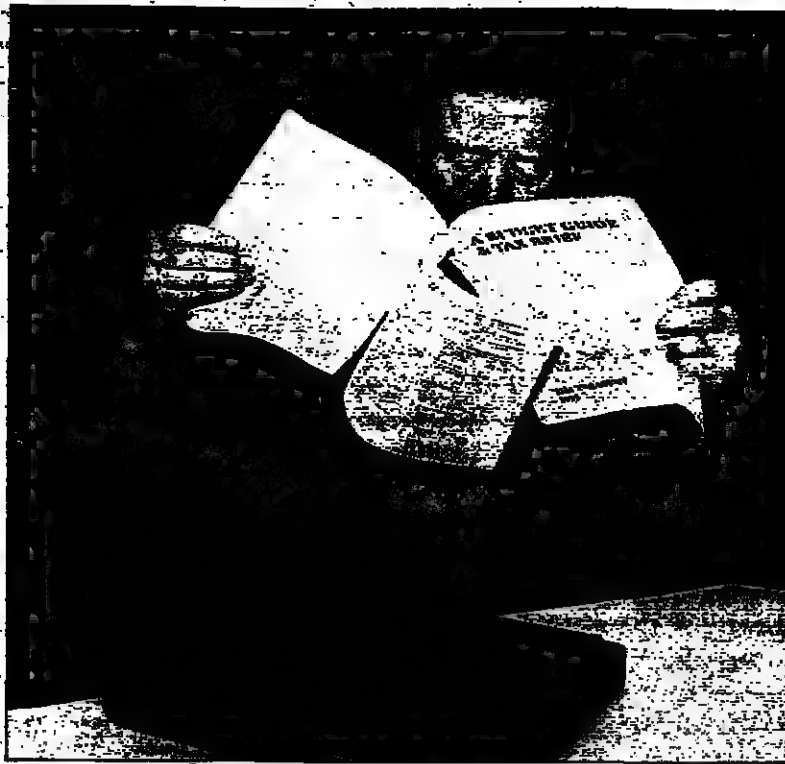
Song for Sly

EDGAR BRONFMAN Jr, Seagram's CEO, has turned tail on the dog-eat-dog world of business, and penned the slushy theme song for Sylvester Stallone's new film. Under the testosterone-packed pseudonym "Sam Roman", he has horrified colleagues who think it takes a rotavirer to run a £14 billion drinks empire. "Just your breath in the night! Can make me feel all right! When you sigh as you're drifting away! Oh baby! It's just a taste of Bronfman's lyrics from *Wherever There is Love*. One wonders what tipple the crooner was taking.

Web of intrigue

PENSIONER Patrick Mountain yesterday launched his own site on the Internet for investors angry at the Alliance & Leicester's conversion terms. Users can source background information, see what the action group has achieved and view suggestions on how to protest. There is also a blank page for the building society to respond.

MORAG PRESTON



Unlike the building societies, Kenneth Clarke is not expected to provide the sort of big giveaways in the Budget that will encourage shoppers to spend

Our mutual friends restore the needed 'feel-good' factor

IF Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, stood up in the House of Commons in two weeks' time and announced an 8p reduction in the basic rate of tax, the Opposition and indeed the City would accuse him of economic suicide. Yet that is precisely the economic result that four leading building societies will achieve next year and some Conservative leaders hope it might be the turning point in their fortunes.

Such a budgetary giveaway would almost certainly be a trigger for a bonanza in consumer spending, pushing up the rate of inflation, adding to the pressure on interest rates, which in any case edged up a notch last month.

While the building society conversion payouts are not due until next summer, millions of households will be told in the months before the election just how much they can expect and will no doubt be calculating how to spend their good fortune when the election is called.

A total of £16 billion is being given to building society members. It will be fed into the economy next year without the need for a dash for votes at the Budget. The Halifax, Woolwich, Alliance & Leicester and Northern Rock could be involved in the biggest switch of capital to equities the UK has ever seen. In addition, Bristol & West is set to be taken over by the Bank of Ireland. If all the conversions go ahead, about 20 million people will become shareholders in the converted building societies. This figure is higher than the number of shareholders introduced to the stock market during more than a decade of popular capitalism.

In addition to these four society firms, Norwich Union is also anticipated to float before the end of next year. It could release shares worth £3 billion to £4 billion, benefiting three million policyholders.

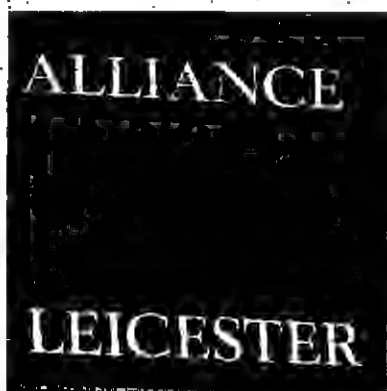
If the four society floats follow the pattern of the Abbey National, about a quarter of the new shareholders will sell their shares in the first year, many will sell in just a few weeks, with a further 25 per cent selling out in the following four years. Even so, a £4 billion cash injection into the economy is the equivalent of 2p off the basic rate of income tax.

Rob Thomas, UBS building society analyst, believes that the society flotations would almost certainly be inflationary. He said: "They could add up to 2 per cent on spending, which is around the £450 billion mark."

A report carried out by Harris Research on behalf of Nikko Europe analysed what effect the conversions could have on the economy. The research company questioned 2,000 people about what they planned to do with the payout. It found that those people who planned to spend their windfall were likely to choose to go on a holiday or travel, were interested in buying clothes or improving their homes.

The report predicted that about £500

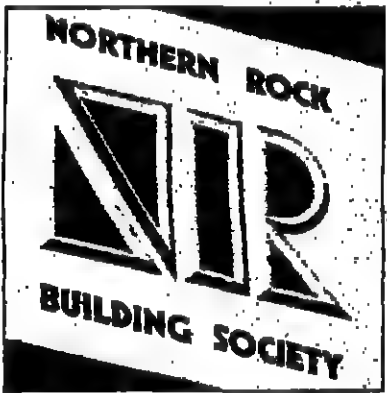
Caroline Merrell finds that everyone's a winner in the Great British giveaway



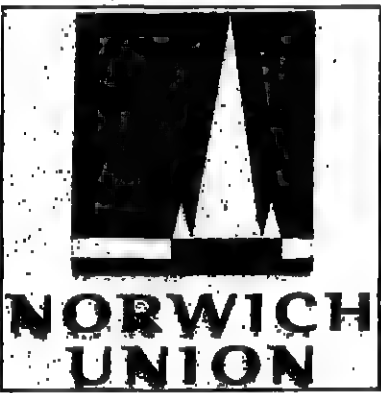
Alliance members will receive £1,000



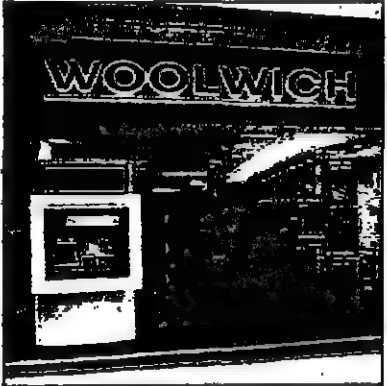
Halifax: £1,000 to shareholders



Northern Rock: offers £900 payout



Norwich Union: £500 to members



Woolwich: £1,000 for shareholders



Bristol & West: plans to pay £700

million to £750 million extra would be added to the sales in this sector. The money could also be spent on domestic appliances, televisions and music centres. The jewellery and toy industries are also expected to get a modest boost.

Two societies, the Cheltenham & Gloucester and the National & Provincial, have already gone through the process of converting. The Cheltenham & Gloucester was taken over by Lloyds Bank last year, with members receiving a total of £1.8 billion.

Unlike the other four societies poised for conversion, the payout was made in

cash. According to Harris Research about two thirds of the money was saved, while one third was spent on among other things, holidays and home improvements. However, the Cheltenham & Gloucester payout arrived when consumer confidence in the UK was still at a low ebb. The first real signs of recovery in the housing market had not begun to show, and many people were still concerned about losing their jobs. This time round many more people may be encouraged to spend.

The National & Provincial takeover by the Abbey National earlier this year also released about £1.35 billion in the form of cash and shares into the economy. The majority of the National & Provincial's 1.4 million members opted to take cash rather than shares: the minimum payout was £500, the maximum £3,500, and the average was £1,323. Payouts arrived in August. About £600 million of the cash has already been removed from the Abbey National — a fair proportion is likely to have been spent.

Simon Briscoe, Nikko Europe economist, said: "It is still unclear where this money has gone. Spending figures over the last month have been pretty erratic. An extra £100 million spent, which would only be a tenth of the £1 billion cash released in the takeover, would add 1 per cent to the retail figures."

The latest retail figures show that high street sales have risen steeply, at the fastest rate since the 1988 boom. Some of this extra spending will almost certainly be related to the cash removed from the Abbey National after its takeover of National & Provincial.

The general effects on spending of the flotations may be difficult to quantify, but one thing is certain — some of the biggest beneficiaries of the building society bonanza will be the highly paid teams of advisers taken on to get each of the societies to market. In its transfer document, issued last week, Alliance & Leicester revealed that the costs of conversion would hit the £58 million mark. The total bill for all four of the flotations could be as high as £400 million.

Among those to benefit will be the Post Office, the Royal Mail, Halifax, for instance, will have to send out transfer documents and other relevant information to each of its nine million members. The total bill for its postage is expected to be between £10 million and £20 million.

Alliance & Leicester anticipates spending £8 million on mailing its 3.5 million members five times during the conversion process. The Royal Mail last year made profits of £354 million from dealing with 17.5 billion first and second class letters. One billion more letters will considerably boost its profits.

The teams of highly paid lawyers hired for the conversion process will also find 1997 a bumper year.

Linklaters & Paine, the City law firm, has nearly made a clean sweep of the honours, handling conversions for the Woolwich, Alliance & Leicester and Halifax. Its 162 partners who, according to the monthly magazine, *Legal Business*, bring average profits to the firm of £381,000 annually, can look forward to a cash bonanza.

Top lawyers often charge fees of £500 an hour — a third of which translates in to profits. Their fees will make a considerable dent in the total costs of conversion. The spoils on the merchant bank side are to be divided up between J.P. Morgan, the US bank, and Schroders.



Waiving the rules: the Irish miracle

John Major likes to claim that Britain has the strongest economy in Europe. Fair enough as a Chirac-lease, but not true, and by a long way. For nine of the past ten years one country has easily headed the league on almost any test you could devise. The Irish Republic has the fastest growth, the highest investment, the strongest trade balance, and the fastest job creation in the EU. Now it can add the lowest inflation and the tightest budget — and, not surprisingly, the strongest currency in the exchange-rate mechanism.

Read figures, and swallow hard. GDP growth has averaged more than 7 per cent over the past three years. The visible trade surplus is nearly 20 per cent of GDP — despite a consumer boom and a construction boom. Perhaps the figures, especially for trade, need to be read a shade sceptically? Possible. A notoriously undisciplined border with Northern Ireland encourages mass smuggling when Republic duties on drink, tobacco or fuel rise more than a little above UK rates. But no plausible correction would alter the big picture: this is an Irish miracle.

But an example to us all? An uncomfortable one, if you share the conventional Euro-wisdom. The Irish miracle owes nothing to tax cuts, deregulation, or privatisation. Taxes have until recently been raised, not cut. The economy is still riddled with subsidies, so revenue is wasted. Yet the national debt has been reduced by a third, measured against GDP, without what the European Commission calls "Treasury transactions". The main utilities are still publicly owned. Cost inflation has been controlled not by competition or tight money, but by a successful incomes policy.

Meanwhile, the main stimuli which have made it all happen are not exactly Euro-neighbourly. Investment has been attracted by corporate taxes which are not just low, but an offence against the very idea of harmonisation; and total growth has been sustained by two almost stealthy devaluations, in 1986 and 1993.

— both handily blamed on Britain. Indeed, one further paradox of the Irish miracle, Irish freedom from sterling — proclaimed with much premature chest-beating in 1978 — has been only a temporary liberation. After many adventures, the two currencies are almost exactly at parity again.

This begs two obvious questions: why does it all work? And how do they get away with it? One central secret is the most mobile labour force on earth (a leftover from the great potato famine of 1848). This is a country where at times a third of the adult men of working age have found jobs in Britain, many of them eager to return home at any whiff of opportunity.

Many are in the US and do not move back so readily. This supply of expatriates means that the Irish labour market cannot ever get tight and Irish managers in the US and UK also help to steer new projects to the old country. No other country would wish to mount such a diaspora; but at least they can note the economic advantages of open immigration.

As for getting away with it, there is nothing small and remote. If Ireland were a main competitor, and its 10 per cent corporate tax was on offer just across a frontier from France, European summits would quickly degenerate into snarling matches. But with less than a tenth of the French population, and 300 miles of sea to lend detachment to the view, the Irish can qualify as mascots — the European equivalent of the champions that Michael Heseltine wants to identify among British service providers. See, Europe does work, for some at least; and aren't they the darling people, anyhow? It would be more accurate just to call them the lucky people; and after centuries of the other kind, why not? More people might celebrate if they could take a stake in the new success story; but the Republic has one more oddity up its sleeve. The equity market is almost invisibly small. As in Germany, you can only really get in through the banks.

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Hibernation time on the home front

From Mr K.A. Yeomans

Sir, It is surely not surprising that monthly mortgage lending is heading for "winter hibernation" (Setback to home loans recovery, *The Times*, October 29).

There is every indication of a future increase in the bank rate. Every 1 per cent will result in an additional annual repayment of £500 on a £50,000 mortgage. Even the prospect of a penny in the pound reduction in income tax — that yields £200 annually on £20,000 of taxable income — does not inspire confidence in the purchase of property. This is particularly so since investment in property is no longer perceived as a reliable hedge against inflation.

Yours faithfully,
K.A. YEOMANS,
306 Uxbridge Road,
Rickmansworth,
Hertfordshire.

Small firms' success is essential to Britain's recovery

From Mrs Barbara Roche, MP for Hornsey and Wood Green (Labour)

Sir, Your business pages (November 4) report a survey showing that managers in small businesses lack key skills.

The report — from the Institute of Management — makes alarming reading. A majority of those surveyed considered that they lacked vital skills in strategy and planning, training and development, market-

ing, sales and leadership. They are confused about where to find the training they need and the training courses they had experienced were too often targeted at large companies. The report concluded that the success of the small business sector is being threatened by this lack of skills.

Government ignores these findings at its peril, and at Britain's. Ensuring appropriate training is available is a

key priority for Labour. Our University for Industry will mean that firms — including small ones — will be able to access training from a PC in their workplace at a time and pace to suit them. We strongly believe that if Britain is to become competitive again it is essential that small firms are helped to succeed.

Yours faithfully,
BARBARA ROCHE,
House of Commons, SW1.

Surprises from the Goldfish

From Mr Martin Rutland

Sir, I write in reply to Annabel Geddes's letter (Business Letters, November 1), in which she states that the Goldfish credit card might sink rather than swim because it was offered to someone who is not a British Gas customer.

I am happy to advise that Goldfish cardholders can also redeem the savings they make every time they spend with the card at any Asda store against groceries, petrol, clothing and a variety of other goods.

You'll continue to be surprised at what you can do with a Goldfish!

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN RUTLAND
(Communications Director),
Goldbrand Developments,
North Street,
Winkfield,
Windsor,
Berkshire.

Audit Commission memo and the dropping of extortion cases

From Ms Melanie Raizon

Sir, As the solicitor involved at the time, may I come to the defence of Jason Nisse over his article "Bribe-seeking officials: escape prosecution" (October 14)? The internal Audit Commission memo he obtained contradicted the claim, repeated in the commission letter criticising him (*The Times*, October 22), that extortion cases are dropped only for lack of evidence. The memo stated: "If what [the complainant] says is

true it looks as though" the officer was engaging in corruption. In short, the memo stated it should not be investigated because, even if true, it was not to be treated as criminal. The commission did not ask for the evidence, so Mr Vevvers is inaccurate in implying corruption was not pursued.

Letters to the Business section can be sent by fax on 0171-782 5112.

sued due to "lack of evidence in an individual case".

Your readers should be aware that if they fall victim to what Mr Nisse described as the commonest form of extortion, bribes, and which Professor Zander says is criminal, their case will not come before the courts. Other officials will take their decision not to prosecute.

Yours faithfully,
MELANIE RAZON,
14 Buckland Crescent, NW3.

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

مكتبة ابن الجوزي

Equities and gilts higher in thin trading

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	%	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES						
117.00	116.00	Adnams Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	Beck's Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	Carlsberg Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	Heineken Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	Timothy's Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
BANKS						
117.00	116.00	Barclays Bank	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	HSBC Bank	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	London City	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	Midland Bank	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	NatWest Bank	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
BREWERS, PUBS & REST						
117.00	116.00	Adnams Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	Beck's Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	Carlsberg Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
117.00	116.00	Heineken Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
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117.00	116.00	Timothy's Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
ENGINEERING, VEHICLES						
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FOOD MANUFACTURERS						
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BUILDING & CONSTRUCT						
117.00	116.00	Adnams Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
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ELECTRICITY						
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HOUSEHOLD GOODS						
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INSURANCE						
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PRINTING & PAPER						
117.00	116.00	Adnams Ltd	116.50	+0.50	+0.4%	18.5
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MINING						
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PROPERTY						
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OTHER FINANCIAL						
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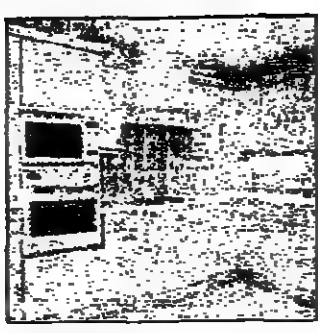
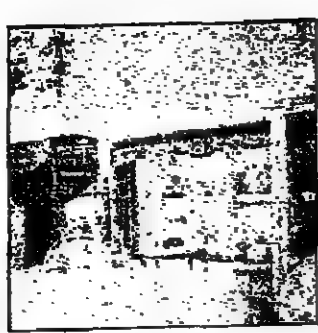
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■ POP 1

The MTV Awards: a welcome global party for the music industry, or just a slick piece of marketing?



■ POP 2

Junior Wells, now the senior statesman of the blues, shows his mettle at the Jazz Café

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ POP 3

At the Festival Hall, the great Youssou N'Dour generously shares the limelight with his protégé



■ RISING STAR

From pub singer to Messiah: Steve Balsamo prepares to play the lead in *Jesus Christ Superstar*

POP: David Sinclair on the real reasons for tomorrow's MTV Awards and other musical gong-fests; plus gig reviews

See the show, buy the album

Let hands be shook, champagne poured: yes, I've come for my award. So sang the Beautiful South a few years ago. And there will be plenty of champers and glad-handing going on tomorrow night when the 1996 MTV Europe Awards, hosted by Robbie Williams, will be staged at Alexandra Palace in north London.

George Michael, Simply Red, the Fugees, Bryan Adams, Metallica, Kula Shaker, Boyzone, Peter Andre and Garbage will be among the acts performing before an invited audience of 4,500 music industry movers and shakers. But their real target will be the viewers in a potential 55 million European households who will be able to see the ceremony live on MTV, and the further hundreds of millions worldwide who will be able to tune in for the recorded version in the days following.

The old sporting adage that it is not so much the winning as the taking part that counts could have been invented to describe the modern televised music awards show. As Ed Bicknell, manager of Mark Knopfler and Dire Straits, explains, they are more a shop window for the industry than a celebration of musical excellence or a means of promoting new talent. "It is basically a vehicle for selling records, and what television wants is big names and lots of glitz," he says. "In America, the Grammys are treated by the record companies in just the same way that the Oscars are treated by the film industry. An enormous amount of lobbying goes on to get acts nominated and to get acts performing at them. Once they do get on, people such as Madonna will make a huge effort to make their performance stand out."

With the Q Awards (televised last week on VH-1), the Music of Black Origin Awards (ITV, November 21) the Smash Hits Poll Winners Party (live on BBC1, December 1) and the

Brits (ITV, February 25), the calendar is becoming crowded with such events. But is their significance becoming eroded as a result?

"The MTV awards are not the run-of-the-mill industry backslapping exercise that most of us are accustomed to going to," says Peter Einstein, business director of MTV Europe. "These awards really represent the views and tastes of young Europeans."

6 An enormous amount of lobbying goes on to get acts nominated

In which case, one inevitably wonders why there are not more acts of a specifically European (as opposed to Anglo-American) provenance involved. "That's simply the way the market is," says Brent Hansen, creative director of MTV Europe. "We have got [Italian singer] Eros Ramazzotti on stage. [German punk group] Die Toten Hosen are in there along with [Italian techno DJ] Robert Miles. But we can't start loading it with European acts just to score points. The winners are voted for by the viewers, and for the kid on the street in Istanbul or Jerusalem it's what is happening out there."

There is a deeply held, if rather old-fashioned, view that MTV itself has played no small part in reinforcing the dominance of American popular culture abroad. But, as Charlie Gillett, director of Oval Records and respected radio broad-

caster, points out, the reverse may be true. "I've been dismayed by the role MTV seems to have had in standardising music into different categories in America," Gillett says. "But I think it has had a different effect in Europe. German, Danish and Swedish acts, particularly dance acts such as Ace of Base, have surfaced through MTV Europe, and not all of them are bad. Ace of Base's first record was great."

A more difficult charge to answer is that awards shows have played a significant part in delivering rock'n'roll, once the sound of youthful rebellion, into the arms of the dreaded establishment. There were far more politicians and peers than pop stars in attendance at last week's launch party for the MTV awards, held at the National Portrait Gallery. The keynote speech was delivered by Virginia Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary, who is becoming something of a regular at these affairs.

According to the Labour MP Austin Mitchell, his fellow parliamentarians were there for "the free booze, the free food and because it was at the National Gallery. But it's also because they want to talk to a different crowd, which they can't do elsewhere."

However, this kind of thing does not go down well among the more diehard firebrands in the pop industry. "I think MTV is as out of touch as the old Radio 1 was," says Alan McGee, president of semi-independent Creation Records and mentor of Oasis, who are shortlisted in three categories of tomorrow's awards. "MTV doesn't do anything for new bands on independent labels. It's the most establishment format imaginable, summed up by the fact that Virginia Bottomley was the hostess with the mostest at the pre-awards drink-up."

● The 1996 MTV Europe Music Awards will be broadcast live tomorrow (9pm) on MTV and on Saturday by ITV (10.55pm)



Robbie Williams, host of the MTV award ceremony, gets cosy with model Carla Bruni at last year's bash

Senior service

IT IS more than 40 years since a brash and talented harmonica player and singer called Junior Wells made his mark on a Chicago blues scene dominated by the likes of Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and Elmore James. There is still a touch of that brashness and, happily, no diminution of that talent now that 61-year-old Wells has himself become

BLUES

Junior Wells
Jazz Café, NW1

an elder statesman of the blues. But Wells has moved with the times. His new and largely acoustic album on Telarc, *Come on in this House*, may mark a return to his Memphis blues roots, but this evening was strictly big band blues, with an eight-piece band, including a three-piece brass section, setting up funky rhythms which had more in common with James Brown than Little Walter. As a result, it was Wells the vocalist who dominated proceedings.

His vocal talents have survived the years almost intact, even if the lyrics of his theme tune, *Messin' with the Kid*, don't exactly fit the bill nowadays. When he did get around to playing the harmonica, the solos were short and sharp (veering on the discordant at times) but effective.

It would have been a joy to see Wells playing with some of the guests on his new album — slide guitarist Sonny Landreth, acoustic newcomer Corey Harris or all-around bluesman Bob Margolin. Instead we were given lounge club blues — *Little Red Rooster*, *I Got My Mojo Working* and *Hoodoo Man* — and the capacity crowd lapped it up.

JOHN CLARKE

First rays of a new African star

SUPPORT acts who steal the show are not usually very popular with headlining stars. On this rare occasion Youssou N'Dour, probably the biggest name in African music, could not have been more thrilled that his protégé, the remarkable Cheikh Lo, walked away with the plaudits. That was exactly how he had planned it.

Most of the audience had come to hear Youssou's pop-oriented hits, such as *Seven Seconds*, but he thrust the spotlight on the slender, dreadlocked figure of Lo. Nobody was disappointed, for what we witnessed was the British debut of a rare talent destined to become one of world music's biggest stars.

WORLD
Youssou N'Dour
Festival Hall

N'Dour planned the current tour in the style of an old Roman review, with a dozen musicians, mostly drawn from his Super Étoile band, who wander on and off stage, playing in different combinations. He sang back-up, engaged in some thrilling call and response vocals and danced while Lo captivated us for an hour and a half.

Traditional rhythms combined with swaying Latin moods characterise Lo's

music. There is also a strong spiritual quality: he is a follower of the Mourides, a laid-back Islamic sect which appears to have more in common with Rastafarianism than the turbulent mullahs of the Middle East. The result is warm and lyrical, relaxed yet passionate, based on simple lilting rhythms that gradually build into complex and mesmerising patterns.

Only in the final half hour did N'Dour take centre stage. In his early years he would produce two versions of his albums, a full African sound and then a lighter, pop-tinted European cut. Two weeks ago he performed in straight pop vein to an ecstatic but almost totally white crowd in Johan-

nesburg. A far blacker London audience got the authentic African version, a sweaty, downtown Dakar nightclub recreated on a cold and blustery South Bank evening. There was no place for *Seven Seconds*, no pandering to pop sensibilities, just raw Senegalese passion as his voice swooped and soared using the traditional techniques of *tasso* (an early kind of rap) and *bakou* (a trilling chant). It was as fine an evening as London's African music fans have heard all year — and when Lo's final appearance drew the biggest cheer of the night no one was prouder than N'Dour.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

Swede and sour

THEY may be Sweden's most successful pop export since Abba, but the clean-cut quintet known as the Cardigans often seemed to be pulling in different directions at their Bristol University show. While singer Nina Persson's helium voice soared skyward, musical kingpin Peter Svensson indulged his passion for loudly crashing heavy metal guitar, and keyboard player Lars Johansson topped everything off with kitsch easy-listening flourishes.

It's an unlikely but winning formula, especially with Svensson's highly catchy melodies yoking the whole attractive package together. Shamelessly flirting with bossa nova and 1970s disco, these stylish young Swedes deal in a rarefied brand of knowing nostalgia far removed from the classic rock pantheon currently being pillaged by Britpop.

At their best, the Cardigans marry the giddy playground rush of superior Euro-pop to sour and highly adult sentiments. This dark undertow during tracks from their recently released third album, *First Band on the Moon*, than on the breezier tunes from its million-selling predecessor, *Life*. Whereas older numbers such as *Carnival* or *Rise and Shine* simply whirled like brightly coloured spinning tops, the more recent songs invariably packed a sting behind their cheery demeanour.

Sometimes the musical arrangements suited Persson's

POP
The Cardigans
Bristol

lyrical tone perfectly, as in *Been It* or *Step on Me*, whose themes of emotional slavery and abuse were reinforced by a dissonant and slightly queasy delivery. At other times these two elements were purposefully mismatched, with jaunty gallops such as *Never Recover* masking fraught tales of loveless war. Nina's penchant for concluding each bitter-sweet narrative with bursts of derisive laughter only added to the jarring, manic depressive effect.

Sadly, this habit also increased the sense of chilly aloofness which the Cardigans often bring to their live shows. Coming across as neither warm nor willing entertainers, they made little effort to involve the audience in their private dramas and only exchanged blandly minimal pleasantries. Most of the group speak perfect English, so the problem is clearly not one of language, but of temperament.

Still, they topped off their set with *Great Divide*, a beautiful elegy to a ruined love affair that showed they are capable of sincere sentiment amid all the arch musical allusions and impenetrable Nordic poise.

STEPHEN DALTON

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament
STEVE BALSAMO

Profession: Singer and actor
Age: 25

Superstar material? Literally. He is playing the title role in the revival of Tom Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Lyceum from Tuesday.

Unconventional route to the West End: "After dropping out of an art degree at Swansea Institute, I worked for a piano removal firm and at the Port Talbot steel works, in between spells on the dole." He then enrolled on a performing arts course at Neath Tertiary College and within a few months had landed a part in a touring production of *Les Misérables*.

When and why did he start singing? "At 18, I had a girlfriend who was obsessed with rock singers. Jon Bon Jovi in particular." In a fit of jealousy, he joined a band and started belting out Alice Cooper cover versions in Swansea pubs.

What set him apart at May's auditions? The show's director, Gale Edwards, was won over by Balsamo's "natural charisma" and "astounding good rock'n'roll voice".

Lucky break: He had stayed on the Neath performance course just long enough to appear in one production — playing Christ in *Superstar*. "So I was totally at home with Jesus's main song, *Gethsemane*, at the auditions."

How does it feel to play Christ? "Very exciting, but quite a big responsibility. I'm very conscious that some Christians feel short-changed that the show ends at the Crucifixion."

Other main string to his bow: He has written hundreds of songs and is lead singer with a three-piece band, *Living Room*. "Think Seal with flavours of the Eagles."

DANIEL ROSENTHAL

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CHANGING TIMES



JAZZ

The saxophone colossus comes to town: Sonny Rollins mixes humility with perfectionism



DANCE

The Paris Opera Ballet makes its first excursion into the work of Frederick Ashton

THE TIMES ARTS



MUSIC

Magnificent Mahler: the BBC Symphony Orchestra rises to the Sixth Symphony



OFFER

Special prices for Griff Rhys Jones in *Plunder* at the Savoy: see Theatre Club for details

A humble giant, Sonny side up

JAZZ: Clive Davis on why Sonny Rollins can't bear to hear his own music

If there is one Sonny Rollins album title that everybody knows, it must be *Saxophone Colossus*, that granite landmark of 1955. Four decades on, as he opens the door of his apartment, Rollins still cuts an imposing figure: there is a weighty solidity to his frame, and his trim beard, snow-white now, gives him the austere look of a tenor-playing Captain Ahab.

In jazz circles Rollins remains a giant, one of the last active survivors of the generation who drew up the postwar rules. When he arrives at the Barbican for the closing weekend of the Oris London Jazz Festival, his audience can expect another masterclass in the art of extended improvisation.

A face-to-face encounter reveals another, more vulnerable facet of his personality. A quintessential perfectionist, he discusses his own work with a humility rarely encountered in these days of PR bluster and image consultants.

Theodore Walter Rollins knows the measure of his own contribution but still senses a duty to haul himself one step higher. Plenty of musicians, for instance, prefer not to hear their own recordings. Even so, Rollins's sense of distaste for his own albums goes well beyond the norm.

private personas. On the front we see his imperial profile engraved on a coin or medallion, a Caesar for the Nineties. On the back of the sleeve, above the list of contents, stands a single, almost plaintive line: "I hope these selections from the body of my recordings meet with the approval of my loyal fans."

The point, as Rollins knows only too well, is that the loyal fans — especially those who, have been following him since the early days on Prestige — have been prone to a certain restlessness of late. The 19 times on *Silver City*, ranging from the funky exuberance of *G-Man* to the swirling balladry of *I'm Old*.

Fashioned, maintain an enviable standard. But, taken as a whole, the albums of the past 20 years or so have been a mixed bunch.

His live appearances have prompted similar misgivings. Catch him on the right evening, and he can deliver two hours of unforgettable, spontaneous music-making. But Rollins is

not immune to the laws of gravity, and when his performances do not rise to the occasion, the metronomic drone beat and the self-effacing solos of his sidemen, including his nephew Clifton Anderson on trombone, make an uninspired combination.

One other complaint is that, in common with other players of his stature, he no longer performs in clubs. Concert halls, after all, cannot begin to match the ambience of a room where the players can feed off the energy and enthusiasm of an audience huddled around tables. Rollins understands the logic behind the grievance, but given his dislike of travelling, one-nighters allow him to reach more people.

His links with his native New York and its musical trends have become more tenuous since the period, nearly 40 years ago, when



Still bestride the world: Sonny Rollins, restless perfectionist, master of improvisation, and one of the last active survivors of the generation who drew up the postwar rules

he could be found practising, night after night, on the Williamsburg Bridge above the East River. Though he keeps his spartan studio apartment in the bustle of the now-fashionable Tribeca district, his home is in tranquil upstate New York, not far from Woodstock.

On average, he ventures out for 40 or 45 shows a year, a reasonable amount for a man his

age. Yet as he nears his eighth decade he finds the urge to perform is growing stronger rather than waning.

"Playing the number of dates I do has been great, because it has allowed me to be really charged up when I do go out. But the age I'm at now, I want to play more. There are so many things I want to do, and I know that I'm not a kid who thinks

he's going to be around forever."

There may be a radical new development in his music, too. While *33*, the album he released earlier this year, marked a welcome return to a more robust trio format (with Tommy Flanagan and the much younger Stephen Scott sharing the piano duties), Rollins talks about edging towards a more "elemental" form.

This, remember, is the musician who has teased all manner of subtleties out of calypso tunes — a reflection of his family's Caribbean roots. His new ideas appear to point in a similar direction: "It's hard to explain what I'm looking for because it hasn't crystallised yet in my mind. But it's about looking backwards to something more primitive... more aboriginal. The

sound has come to me a couple of times when I've been playing, and I've been working on it ever since."

The concept, however vague, sounds fascinating. I tell him. He gives a self-deprecating grunt. "Yes. But now I've got to go and do it." Sonny Rollins is reaching for the next rung on the ladder.

● Sonny Rollins appears at the Barbican on Friday at 7.30pm

French for Freddy

THE Paris Opera Ballet has danced a huge range of works, but its current performance of *Rhapsody* represents its first experience of Frederick Ashton. It comes as quite a shock to see France's dance heroes in such an alien style and it must have been an even greater shock to the heroes themselves. Never before had they been clothed in such a profusion of filigree movement and intricate spatial patterning.

Rhapsody is warm work, not only in the central role, created in 1980 around Mikhail Baryshnikov's divine prowess, but also in the other roles, positioned to refract that virtuosity. The French male corps de ballet show a wonderful togetherness, clean shaping and forthright dynamic that keeps them right on top of Baryshnikov's headlong rhythms (played with verve under Alexander Polianichko).

Manuel Legris has the stylish strength and puff for the glittering cascade of killer steps and fearsome on-the-spot jets. He is the best since



Arbo and Legris in *Rhapsody*

Paris Opera Ballet Palais Garnier

Baryshnikov: better able to stay above water than any of the Royal Ballet men. He also possesses an intelligence that draws out the mysterious romance with the ballerina.

Ashton's famed exhortation, "bend, bend", needed repeating to the French women, to loosen their torsos for those

delicately adjusted angles of the shoulders which give each movement its final touch of colour. Even Delphine Moussin, more alluringly resonant as the ballerina than Carole Arbo at the other performance I saw, lacked this fluency and the gentle deftness of footwork Ashton requires.

The programme opened with the *Debut*, the sumptuous display of the company's hierarchy, and Serge Lifar's neo-classical *Suite en blanc*, both part of the Paris

tradition. Agnes de Mille's *Fall River Legend*, however, was another company premiere. Beautifully performed by the whole cast, it became outstanding with Elisabeth Maurin as the darkly troubled anti-heroine. She moulded each gesture with such telling directness and tensed every fibre of her being into a psychological portrait of such multilayered truth that the auditorium seemed to disappear and we felt ourselves sucked into the drama.

NADINE MEISNER

CONCERTS: The SCO lets rip in Edinburgh; the BBC Symphony Orchestra excels in Mahler

JOSEPH SWENSEN, the recently appointed principal conductor of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, is no ordinary musician. Anyone else would have got to work first of all on developing refinement and precision in the string section. But, accomplished violinist though he is, that is clearly not his priority. He is interested more in creating a dynamic ensemble, in encouraging a big sound and the capacity to accommodate his extraordinary interpretative vigour.

Conducting Haydn's Symphony No 83 in C minor in the lively acoustic of the Queen's Hall in Edinburgh, he made something like the effect the work must have had on its first performance in Paris more than 200 years ago, when it was still one of the most imposing, and most extravagantly coloured orchestral scores ever heard.

From the aggressive opening bars onwards there was no relaxation of the pressure. Having got the bit between his teeth, Swensen was not going to let it go until it had been thoroughly shaken by hard-driven rhythms, subjected to extremes of dynamic contrast

The big boss sound

in the Andante, toyed with in a teasingly slow trio section in the third movement, and pushed along at such a pace in the finale that it might easily have stumbled and collapsed. It is an indication of the skill of the SCO that, while giving its all in sound and energy, it scarcely faltered in ensemble.

Although he is an American citizen, Swensen is Nordic by inclination. He lives in Copenhagen, is chief guest conductor of both the Stockholm Chamber and the Lahri Symphony Orchestras, and has obvious affinities with the Scandina-

vian repertoire. In this concert he not only gave an affectionate account of Sibelius's naively exotic incidental music for Procopius's *Belshazzar's Feast* in 1905 but also conducted the first British performance of a long-lost piece for strings written by the same composer two years later.

The *Countryside Portrait* proved to be a beautifully written little elegy unmistakably by Sibelius in spite of its kinship with Grieg and its minimal structural ambition. It is so short, in fact, that a second hearing would have been both welcome and instructive: a concert lasting barely 90 minutes and thin in substance — even though it did include an appealing performance of Haydn's Sinfonia Concertante in B flat as a centrepiece — had more than enough room for it.

GERALD LARNER

Noble despair

MAHLER may have suppressed the title "Tragic" from his Sixth Symphony, but there is no work of his to which it is more suited. It is the only one of his symphonies to end in the minor, and in bleak despair. The three hammer blows of the finale seem to foretell the composer at this time: his enforced resignation from the Vienna Opera, the death of his four-year-old daughter, and the diagnosis of his own fatal heart disease.

One might expect a faithful performance of the symphony to be a depressing affair. But as Jiří Belohlávek's account with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Festival Hall showed, the experience can be exhilarating and, paradoxically, uplifting too.

The grim tread of the opening funeral march gave little quarter, but there was great aesthetic pleasure to be had from the masterly unfolding of the symphonic structure and the skilful blending of instrumental lines. This was a meticulously prepared performance in which winds and brass breathed as one.

Nor was there much let-up in the Scherzo, which Belohlávek placed second, thus immediately re-engaging in the life-and-death struggle. The Andante brought soothing relief. With the finale came the descent into the abyss. Yet here Belohlávek recalled so poignantly life's past joys that one could not be other than uplifted.

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Due to further expansion plans, Foxtons is looking for a trainee property negotiator to join its team of experienced negotiators. The trainee will be responsible for assisting the negotiator in the sale and purchase of property. The trainee will be responsible for assisting the negotiator in the sale and purchase of property. The trainee will be responsible for assisting the negotiator in the sale and purchase of property.

Experienced Lettings Negotiator
Foxtons is looking for an experienced lettings negotiator to join its team of experienced negotiators. The negotiator will be responsible for assisting the negotiator in the sale and purchase of property. The negotiator will be responsible for assisting the negotiator in the sale and purchase of property. The negotiator will be responsible for assisting the negotiator in the sale and purchase of property.

PA/SECRETARY

W4 To £20,000

To provide the comprehensive secretarial and admin support demanded by the IT Director of this large, successful telecommunications company requires Windows literacy, including knowledge of PowerPoint. The role will involve extensive telephone liaison.

PA - IT DEPARTMENT

W1 £18,000

This advertising agency is offering excellent prospects to an individual with a keen interest in IT. Secretarial, diary and travel arrangement experience is essential. Microsoft Office skills would be desirable.

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Office Manager

London

circa £22,000 + p.share

Europe's largest independent consultancy requires an experienced Office Manager to help the development of this fast growing international public relations agency. You will be a highly organised, energetic individual able to take full responsibility for the smooth running of a multi-branch and multi-national office. You will be responsible for the smooth running of a multi-branch and multi-national office. You will be responsible for the smooth running of a multi-branch and multi-national office.

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£17,000

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International consultancy dealing with environmental projects needs sound support for Business Director and team. Excellent administrative skills and ability to cope under pressure essential. Language useful. 55wpm typing and good Windows knowledge. Please telephone 0171 495 2321.

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This senior role with a prestigious insurance group offers global involvement in an exciting environment for a bright PA / secretary. Free gym membership plus many other benefits. Short hand essential. Please telephone 0171 628 9529.

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The Chairman of this leading global securities firm and investment bank requires a top Executive secretary to support his world wide diplomatic and commercial activities. Working to a demanding international schedule he needs a PA with initiative and intelligence to manage his time whilst keeping on top of their own projects. The successful candidate will have the ability to receive and respond independently to the volume and complexity of information flooded in this executive office. The job is only for a Personal Assistant at the peak of their career with previous achievements gained at Chairman level and excellent verbal skills, including shorthand, to match.

Angela Mortimer is an equal opportunities employer. All applicants are positively welcomed.

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Angela Mortimer

THE ESSENTIAL LINK

Temp-to-Perm £20-22,000
This international company based in stunning offices in the West End of London require an experienced secretary to support a team of 3 consultants. You will be responsible for co-ordinating complex diary and travel arrangements, producing presentations and preparing for meetings. The ability to produce your own work is essential as you will be juggling the demands of the team. This lucrative role requires an organised person with flexibility and initiative as well as the potential to support on a long-term basis and develop their relationship. You will be immediately available, with full typing and knowledge of Windows software. Familiarity with presentation packages would be an advantage, as would experience of working in a team-oriented environment. Angela Mortimer is an equal opportunities employer. All applicants are positively welcomed.

0171 287 7788

Angela Mortimer

WORK AND PLAY

£23,000
Our client, an expanding leisure group incorporating a variety of high profile venues, requires a dedicated PA to provide full secretarial support to the Executive Director and Estate Manager. You'll be responsible for time of the office and require a PA with the initiative and decision making ability to handle a range of situations in their absence. Your day will include liaising with city investors, co-ordinating of board meetings and corporate entertainment, production of confidential documents and project management related to the development of new sites. In this entrepreneurial culture a team player with the ability to contribute ideas as well as secretarial expertise will flourish. A proven track record, ideally in a service based industry, combined with shorthand and good knowledge of a Windows based package is essential. Angela Mortimer is an equal opportunities employer. All applicants are positively welcomed.

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Influential

£25,000 neg

A one-off role working with a very influential gentleman in one of London's most exclusive hotels. You will need to have worked in real estate previously as your role will be to purchase properties, advise on the value of properties and negotiate the deal from start to finish. Secretarial skills needed.

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Chairman's Office

£20,000 neg

A high profile role working with a well known business man who has demanding roles of various companies ranging from investment banks to fashion retail. You will work alongside him in a very busy and fast moving environment. The role involves a high level of responsibility and reporting directly to the Chairman. Windows and Excel skills needed.

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Work in beautiful Georgian offices for our prestigious Surveying client-

AUDIO SECRETARY X2 £18,000 pa

You'll have your own office with other secretaries working for a wonderful boss. It's a very busy with lots of audio typing and an excellent opportunity for an exp. Word & Audio Secretary.

ACCOUNTS SEC. £17,000 pa

You'll be the accounts dept main person here, copy and audio typing on Word 6, attending the odd meeting & basic minutes. Accuracy & organisational skills are req for the busy dept.

ICSA PART QUALIFIED???

Co Sec Assistant £23,000 pa. A true organiser & IT in working alongside the Co Sec dealing with statutory admin & stock exchange activities etc.

NATALIE ELLICE

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TRADING PLACES!

£18,500 + MS + BENS + OT

Highly exciting opportunity for a Secretary to work on the Trading Floor of one of London's leading City Banks. The position will incorporate extensive travel arranging and diary maintenance. The ideal candidate will be aged 19-25 with trading floor experience.

Please contact Melinda Marks

Jonathan Wren & Co Ltd,

No.1 New Street, London EC2M 4TP

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JONATHAN WREN

secretaries

MEDIA PA

£20,000 + OT + MS + BENS

A once in a lifetime opportunity to join a dynamic Media team. Based in the West End working for a leading Investment Bank, the pace is hectic and the position varied. Duties include travel, diaries, presentations and expenses. Age 25-30 with 3 years secretarial experience.

Please contact Margaret Sorohan

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JONATHAN WREN

secretaries

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

£25,000 + MS + BENS

An excellent opportunity to work at MD level within a major Investment Bank. Organisational flair will be required to co-ordinate busy diaries, extensive travel arrangements and assist with the preparation of detailed reports. Microsoft Office essential.

Please contact Margaret Sorohan

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BANKING PA

TEMP TO PERM

An excellent opportunity for a mature PA with a minimum of 5 years experience in banking to work for two senior Directors. Candidates must have excellent organisational skills, shorthand 80+ wpm, Word, Excel & PowerPoint. City based. Aged 25-40 years.

Please contact Debra Berry

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PA/OFFICE MANAGER
PUBLISHING COMPANY
To £19,000 + PRP

Would you be happy in a busy media environment? - then read on! Our client seeks an intelligent, confident person, 25-40, with personal and/or office managerial experience. Your role will include negotiating with suppliers, overseeing the smooth running of the office, recruitment of administrative staff and keeping all personnel records. You will work closely with the MD and assist him with his daily work. 55 wpm typing and W4W. Please call Gwyn or fax CV to

Rainbow House

12 South Molton Street, London W1V 1DF

Tel: 0171 491 7883 Fax: 0171 491 5887

RAINBOW HOUSE

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PA TO VP AND PRESIDENT
AMERICAN BANK
TO £25,000 + O/T

Are you a professional PA 30+ with excellent English who enjoys working at very senior level and liaising with top clients? These two Executive need a proactive, confident PA to organise their working lives, prepare presentations to deadlines on hold the fort in their absence. If you enjoy working hard and being well rewarded, call for an immediate interview. W4W and 50wpm typing essential. Hand and Powerpoint advantageous. Please call Gwyn or fax CV to

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CORPORATE HOSPITALITY
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£20,000 + TOP BENEFITS

This is it... A truly exciting and fulfilling role! Prestigious WI company seeks a polished and capable PA to be totally responsible for organising the marketing events for their top profile clients to include lunches, dinners, receptions plus golf, cricket and football corporate days. 18 months experience in a similar role necessary, as is A1 literacy, communication and organisational skills. A really wonderful job! Please call Gwyn or fax CV to

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SENIOR PA/SECRETARY
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£20,000 + PRP + EX BENS

An experienced, outgoing senior PA/Secretary 30+ is required to assist two Partners of Corporate Services Division who are involved in the accounting and financial work at the highest level. Previous supervisory skills are essential as successful candidates will be fully responsible for all departmental secretarial staff including recruitment, training and appraisal. A high level of accuracy is also required, as is fluency and a minimum of 5 years experience in similar level. A great chance to work on your own initiative! Please call Gwyn or fax CV to

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GRADUATE SECRETARY

£18-22K+Great Bens

To support 2 Analysts. Marketing, co-ordinating presentations, research, etc. Total involvement. Call Emily Aldrich.

PA to HEAD of DERIVATIVES

£23K + Bank Bens

Dynamic and varied role for experienced PA. Lots of juggling and prioritising. Based on dealing floor. Call Alex Gaze.

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PUBLIC RELATIONS

£18K + Bank Bens

Confident secretary required for this front line department within top investment bank. SH preferred. Call Sarah Turnbull.

PERSONNEL ADMIN EC2

£22K+Gt B. Bens

Dealing with comps & bens, developing systems. High level of liaison. Mumsy & accuracy essential. Call Emma Marks.

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WA

£30K Excellent Bens

A DEMANDING ROLE

Working for a dynamic financial organisation, you will provide full support to one of the most senior Directors. Previous experience of managing projects and dealing with issues in your boss's absence is key, along with the ability to read a situation and exercise judgement. Travel arrangements, diary management and preparing reports and presentations are just a few of the many tasks attached to this superb role which requires long hours and plenty of energy. If you are a professional PA with banking experience, a sound business acumen and excellent computer skills, call now.

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VICTORIA WALL ASSOCIATES

High profile SH Sec

£22,000 + Exc Banking Bens City

A varied and challenging role based in the Chief Exec's office. Hrs 9.00am - 4.00pm or 12.00pm to 8.00pm on a weekly rota. 0171 600 6220 Gray & Assoc.

Up to £22,000 basic

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Major and Secretariat/Assistant sought for 1 busy trader. High level of client contact and organisational work. Will test a young energetic person. Please fax CV's. 0171 734 4965 Sarah Simpson/HR Recruitment 0171 734 9965

CLOAK AND DAGGER!!

To £15,500 + Exc. Bens.

Due to expansion this intriguing Management Consultancy with strong Int'l and Political interests needs two bright, highly motivated Sec/Assistants to organise two of their fascinating depts. With only a max. of 40-50% typing rest of your time will be spent working with the consultants in their unusual activities. You need to have at least 5 months solid experience, a questioning mind and the ability to adapt within a highly charged, professional team. 50 wpm, W4W, (Spanish useful) Outstanding opening for 2nd jobber.

ANDERSON HOARE 0171 824 8821

High St Ken, Kensington, Sloane Square, Green Park, City

PA/Secretary for Senior

Line Manager with

World and Excel

West London.

Well presented, team spirited

candidate who enjoys being

involved in a busy international

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The Recruitment Specialist.

Sales & Marketing Co-ordinator

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up to £25,000

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This specialist medical products company with offices worldwide prides itself on making a real difference to the patients' quality of life, and it's their commitment to them which drives everything they do.

Working in their small, busy London office, you'll need to use your exceptional organisational skills to keep several projects moving at once. These range from organising every aspect of participation at major European conferences to distributing marketing material to patients and surgeons and running information searches through the Internet. You'll also prepare marketing support documents, make travel arrangements for our sales managers and answer your share of incoming queries to the office.

You'll need a good all round education, preferably to A level standard, plus a minimum of three years' senior secretarial experience. You will be resourceful, capable of driving projects through on your own initiative, and with a strong customer awareness to provide well thought through solutions to customers' and colleagues' requirements. Accurate WP skills, including Microsoft Office is essential, and PowerPoint understanding would be a real bonus. A second language would also be useful but not essential.

If you are ready to make a difference, then please send your CV initially to Jane Booth,

Riley Consultancy, 4 Red Lion Court, London EC4A 3EN. Tel: 0171 353 3223, Fax 0171 353 2338

quoting reference 468/CC.

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Now in its third year, The Times Crème is firmly established as London's leading event for executive personal assistants and office managers.

This year's quality audience of 5525 was warmly welcomed by the 300 exhibitors that participated at Crème 96. This year saw impressive growth with exhibitors numbers increased by 43% and visitor attendance up 19%! The representation from all relevant

business sectors endorses the awareness of the buying potential of the Crème 96 audience - a market which has been, in the past, elusive and difficult to target.

To find out how your business can benefit by exhibiting at Crème 97, please complete the coupon below and return it to:

Jenny Moore, Crème 97,

Europe House, East Smithfield,

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THE TIMES

Crème 97

13 JUNE 1997

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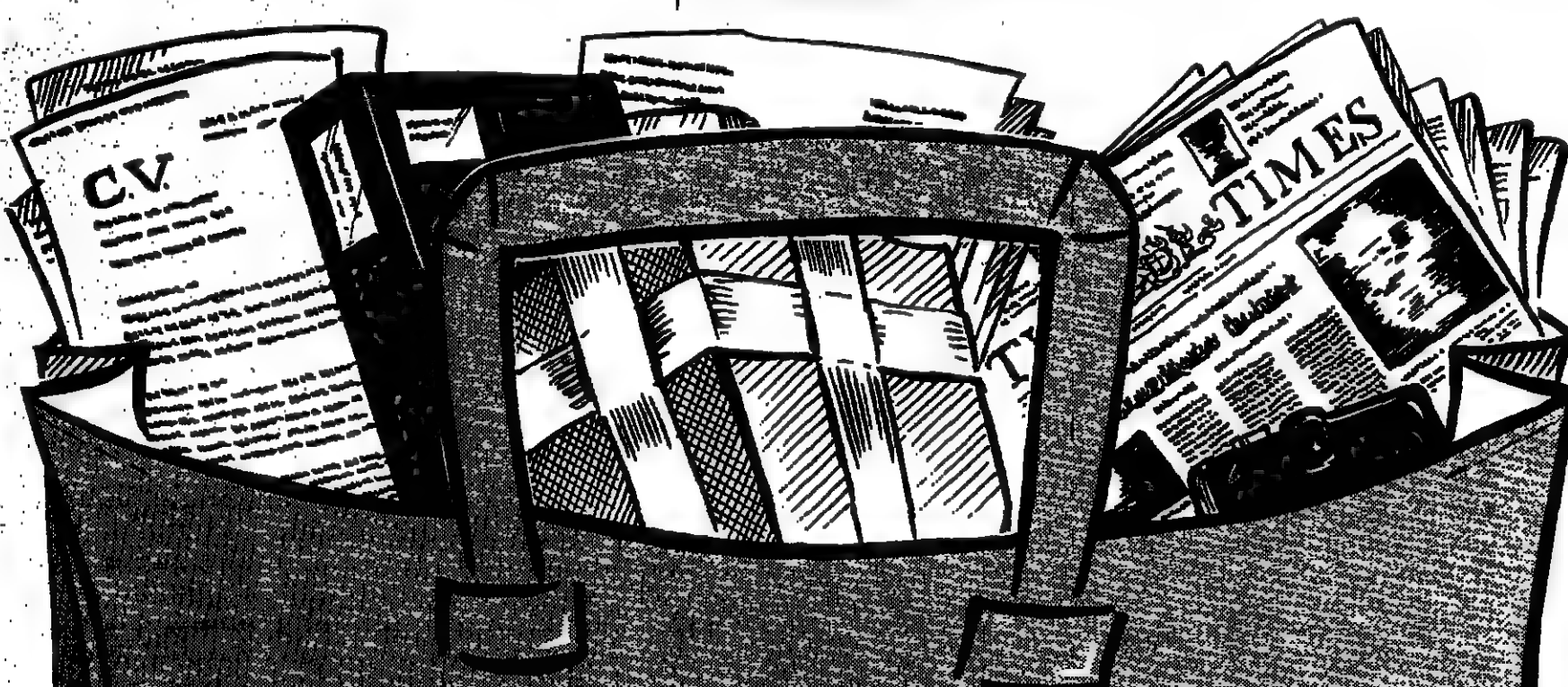
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Headley likely to be rested by England

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN MOUNT GAMBIER AUSTRALIA

DEAN HEADLEY, looking every inch the international-class strike bowler needed by England, is likely to be rewarded for his match-winning performance for the A team against South Australia by being rested for the four-day match against a much-heralded Academy XI here later this week.

Having earned immediate respect from Australian media and cricketers alike by their 12-run victory over the Sheffield Shield holders in Adelaide on Monday, England are expected to rest their leading bowler against an Academy side regarded as "weak" by Rodney Marsh, the coach.

It is no reflection on Headley's ability, more a concern about overworking a player who is almost certain to be called up during the Ashes series next summer should he continue to impress.

Headley, the Kent fast bowler, achieved a career-best match return of 11 for 98 in Adelaide — the fifth time in as many first-class matches for England A that he has captured at least five wickets in an innings — but suffered a hip injury on his return from the A tour to Pakistan last year and missed the early part of the summer.

The setback probably cost him a Test debut and mirrored a similar set of circumstances which befell Glen Chappell on his return from an impressive tour of India with the A team two years ago.

Headley is unlikely to agree with the management's concern over his welfare. A desire to succeed has been instilled upon him since he became a professional.

Although Headley does not have a classical action, his work with Darryl Foster, the Kent coach, has helped him to produce impressive results, with 45 wickets at 27.44 in his ten championship matches last season.

His father, Ron, and grandfather, George, played for West Indies.

Leading lights, from Bradman to Border

John Woodcock concludes the series with an assessment of cricketers who are ahead of the field



THE GREAT CAPTAINS

Of the 108 cricketers I have featured capturing their countries at Test level, from G. O. Allen and the Maharaj Kumar of Vizianagaram at Lord's in 1936 to Michael Atherton and Wasim Akram at the Oval in 1996, very few have had the vision or the instinct or the standing, or some permutation of the three, to make a side more than the sum of its parts. And behind even the best have stood the bowlers to bring results.

Some of the game's most successful captains have needed to be little more than functionaries. Given the attack that was at the disposal of Clive Lloyd and then of Vivian Richards, a duffer could have led West Indies to a succession of overwhelming victories in the 1980s, provided he was not allergic to the sight of blood. As captain of West Indies in Australia in 1975-76, before the Caribbean had been scoured for fast bowlers, and of Lancashire from 1981 to 1983, Lloyd was ineffectual. It was with a bat in his hand and as a catalyst, rather than as a tactician, that he excelled.

Sir Garfield Sobers, the most versatile cricketer the world has seen, won only two of his last 27 matches as captain of West Indies, such was his concern for the winner of the 2.30 at Ascot or the reason for his slice off the tee at Sandy Lane. Denis Compton, another wonderful cricketer, also lacked the bent to make a captain. Many of the best players do, and always have.

On the other hand, Sir Donald Bradman, Sir Leonard Hutton, Sir Frank Worrell, Richie Benaud, Raymond Illingworth and Mike Brearley all have the reputation for not missing a trick. The odd man out



Brearley, one of the best England captains, leaves the field after the extraordinary Headingley Test of 1981

among this sextet is Brearley, because he was nothing like as good a cricketer as the others. In 66 Test innings, most of them batting high in the order, he never made a hundred. It was said of him, though, that he had a degree in people as well as a first at Cambridge, and the way in which he turned round England's fortunes against Australia in 1981, when he came back and took over the

reins from a hopelessly overburdened Ian Botham, has no parallel. The pity is that he never pitted his wits against West Indies, either at home or away.

Bradman, of course, started with the enormous advantage of being as likely as not to win every match off his own bat. In O'Reilly and Grimmett, and then Lindwall and Miller, he also had in his side the

great match-winning bowlers of their day. Hutton and Illingworth were calculating Yorkshiremen who specialised in giving nothing away, which is a skill in itself, albeit a somewhat oppressive one. Benaud was rather the same — an expert in psychological warfare with an immensely shrewd cricket brain. As the first regular black captain of West Indies, Worrell was a Messiah in



Worrell was a messianic figure, Imran a unifying force, Chappell a legendary hard man



Behind even the best have stood the bowlers to bring results

flannels, but he too, had a rare understanding of the game. To play under any of them must have been a revelation.

In quite a different category comes Ian Chappell, a captain whose players swore by him. Whether his methods would have worked with everyone I am not sure, let's just say he had no time for fills, and none for ambivalence. He was hard, straight and resolutely irascible. He led not so much a team as a gang and, having inherited an Australia side that was about to lose the Ashes, he went on to win them back, forging in the process the redoubtable partnership of Lillee and Thomson.

For leading Pakistan, despite their self-destructive ways, to the World Cup in 1992, Imran Khan deserves a special mention. He did it with an amateur which Douglas Jardine, another Oxford man, might have recognised. The two Nawabs of Patandil and Hafeez Kardar, and Ted Dexter for that matter, had something of the same aura.

But what about Allan Border, who had never seemed born to take charge nor been eager to do so, and yet resented being relieved of the captaincy of Australia after doing it for nine years and an incredible 93 Tests? How did he manage this when the rigours of the job and the glare of the media take such a heavy toll?

To start with he had great physical courage, a characteristic of many a small batsman, and he was a very, very good player. To add to that, he became a symbol of defiance; and when his enthusiasm for the fray might have started to wane, along came Shane Warne, the answer to every captain's prayer. There lies the crux. In the overwhelming majority of cases, a captain is as good as his side, especially his bowlers.

John Warr said of playing for Middlesex under R.W.V. Robins that at the end of an unworldly day in the field you always had the consolation of knowing that everything had been tried to bring down the opposition — short of slugging, that is. That, to me, is much nearer the true art of captaincy than the prosecution of blanket attrition or wicket-taking, however successful these may be.

Donald on bonus to reach three figures

By Our Sports Staff

WARWICKSHIRE have offered Allan Donald a substantial cash prize as an encouragement for him to try to reach 100 wickets next season. "We have built incentives into his contract which cut in at 70 wickets," Dennis Amis, the county's chief executive, said yesterday.

The South African, fast bowler, who is returning as the county's overseas player in succession to Shaun Pollock, took 89 first-class wickets for the county in 1995 despite missing three games through injury.

Yesterday, Donald teamed up with Lance Klusener to demolish Karnataka, the Ranji Trophy champions, for the second time as the South Africans won the three-day match in Cochin by 244 runs. Karnataka, set 362, were bowled out for 117 in 205 minutes. Donald's return of three for 23 gave him seven wickets in the match, one less than Klusener.

Saied Amis scored his second unbeaten century in the Singer Champions' Trophy in Sharjah as Pakistan swept aside Sri Lanka by eight wickets to book a place in the final of the three-nation competition.

Anwar, who struck 112 from 125 balls, and his fellow left-handed opener, Asim Sohail, who scored 65 from 126 balls, put on 171 for the first wicket in 391 overs as Pakistan made light work of scoring the 190 needed to overhaul the holders of the World Cup.

Jimmy Adams (67) and the wicketkeeper, Courtney Browne (50), put on 98 for the sixth wicket to repair a poor start by the West Indians against a Northern Territory Invitation XI at Alice Springs. Brian Lara was dismissed for 27 by Mark Hanton, the Tasmanian spinner, as the touring side made 218 for the eighth in their 50 overs and then dismissed the Invitation XI for 170 in 42.5 overs. The West Australian wicketkeeper, Adam Gilchrist, who led the Invitation XI, improved his chances of winning a Test place with an unbeaten 64.

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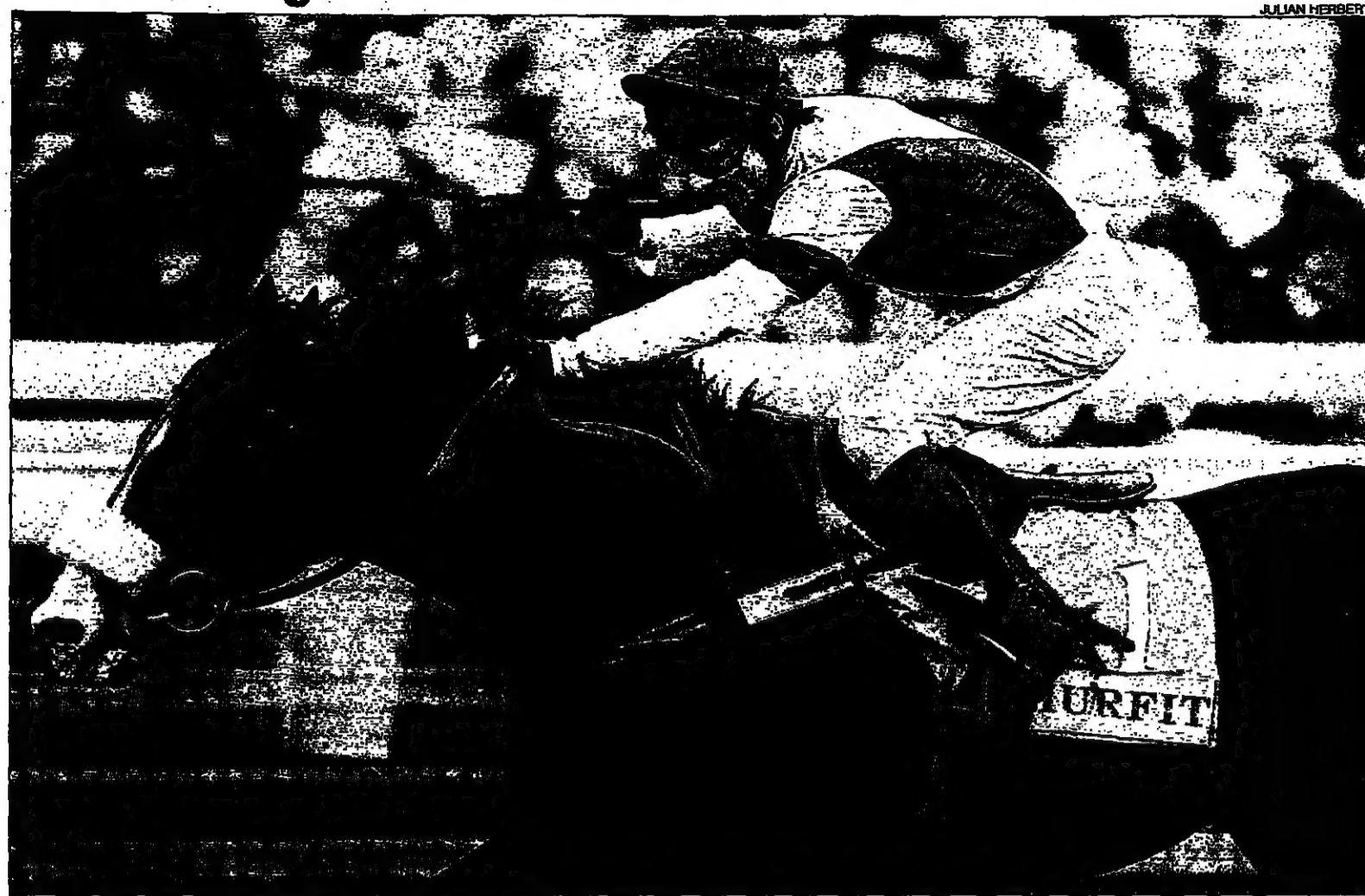
RACING: TOP RIDER MISSES HENNESSY TO PARTNER FORMER CHAMPION HURDLER AT NEWCASTLE

Dunwoody committed to Alderbrook

By JULIAN MURRAY

WITHOUT a victory in the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup, Richard Dunwoody must wait at least 12 months before ending his personal drought in the Newbury showpiece.

Dunwoody will be at Newcastle to partner Alderbrook when the Hennessy is renewed on November 30. He is bound by a prior arrangement with the connections of Alderbrook, who embarked on his final jumps season in the Fighting Fifth Handicap Hurdle before taking up stud duties.



Alderbrook, who won the Champion Hurdle in 1995, makes his seasonal reappearance in the Fighting Fifth Handicap Hurdle at Newcastle

I have a verbal agreement

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: GOLDENSWIFT (1.50 Newbury)
Next best: KARSHI (2.20 Newbury)

to ride Alderbrook and One Man in all their races this season. "Dunwoody said yesterday, 'It looks as though Alderbrook is bound for Newcastle and I will be there to ride him. It's an unfortunate clash of dates, but it happens. I'm looking forward to riding the horse, wherever he runs.'"

The Hennessy remains elusive to Dunwoody among five major races in the National Hunt calendar. He has secured victories in the Grand National, the Cheltenham Gold Cup, the King George VI Chase and the Champion Hurdle, in which he rode Alderbrook to finish second to Collier Bay eight months ago.

Kim Bailey, who trains Alderbrook, yesterday reported his charge in rude health for his seasonal reappearance.

"He is pretty straight now and will be ready to run somewhere near his best on November 30," Bailey said. "The horse has been with me for the last 12 months and he has had a rest for the first time in his career. He spent two months out in a field during the

summer, so it will be nice to start fresh."

Alderbrook has previously been campaigned throughout the year. Successful in group two company on the flat, he enjoyed his finest hour at Cheltenham in 1995 when running away from Large

Action in the Champion Hurdle. His career has been plagued by troublesome foot joints, from which fragments of bone were removed last year, but Bailey is delighted with the seven-year-old's limbs thus far. He added that Alderbrook would not be

risked on unsuitably fast ground.

In addition to Alderbrook's reappearance, the latter days of November will determine whether Master Oats, Bailey's 1995 Cheltenham Gold Cup winner, can resume his chasing career. The trainer said

the leg injury which relegated Master Oats to the sidelines in March: "It will be scanned at the end of the month. If the prognosis is favourable Master Oats will come back into training with the Grand National as his objective. Otherwise, he will miss the whole of

the season and return next year."

The Upper Lambourn trainer nominated Feil The Power, due to reappear at Kempton a week today, as probably his best novice chase prospect. "We will start him off over two miles," Bailey said. "I don't think he saw out the extended 2½ miles when third in the Cathcart Chase."

Meanwhile, Strong Medicine is expected to line up in the Murphy's Gold Cup at Cheltenham on Saturday. Conor O'Dwyer, who replaced Norman Williamson as stable jockey at the start of the season, will be aboard the recent Sandown winner.

Like O'Dwyer, Dunwoody must embark on regular journeys to Ireland to fulfil his riding commitments. Although he has agreements with Dermot Weld and the expanding Edward O'Grady operation, Dunwoody remains very much in demand among British trainers. He regularly rides for Gordon Richards and David Gindoff, and recently reactivated an old association when partnering Silver Shred for Martin Pipe at Chesham last Saturday.

Indeed, Dunwoody's alliance with the Pipe-trained Challenger Du Luc for the Murphy's Gold Cup has triggered a deluge of support for the six-year-old chaser. From an opening quote of 16-1, Challenger Du Luc has now advanced to joint-favourite in the ante-post markets.

"Mr O'Grady has a lot of nice young horses which won't be ready until the second half of the season," Dunwoody explained, "so I've got a bit of time on my hands." His prowess is such that he will not be allowed to idle it away.

Aga Khan renews link with Stoute

ONE of racing's most successful partnerships is to resume after confirmation that Michael Stoute will receive five yearlings to train for the Aga Khan before the end of the year.

Stoute and the Aga Khan enjoyed a fruitful association before the owner withdrew his horses from Britain over Aliya's disqualification from the 1989 Oaks, after traces of the banned substance camphor were found in her urine.

In the ensuing dispute with the Jockey Club over its drug-testing procedures, the Aga withdrew his horses from the stables of Stoute and Luca Cumani, 78 in total, in 1990 to concentrate his breeding and training operations in France and Ireland through Chantilly trainer Alain de Royer-Dupré and Co. Kidare-based John Oxx.

Among the big-race victories the Aga and Stoute shared during the 1980's were Shergar's ten-length triumph in the 1981 Derby and the 1986 Derby victory of Shahrastan.

The Aga announced last year that he would revive his involvement with British racing, and the Luca Cumani-trained Mandilak won for him at Yarmouth a fortnight ago.

On hearing confirmation that his yard would also benefit from a return of the owner's patronage, Stoute said: "I am delighted at the Aga Khan's decision to send me yearlings this year."

WORCESTER

1.00 Blotchard Bard
1.30 KING LUCIFER (nap)
2.00 Chiodani

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 1.30 KING LUCIFER.

GUIDE TO THE RACE

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2.30 WORCESTER NOVICES CHASE

(Grade 1, £12,386, 2m 7f 110yd) (11 runners)

1.00 BLOTCHARD BARD (5.5) (A) (C) (D) (E) (F) (G) (H) (I) (J) (K) (L) (M) (N) (O) (P) (Q) (R) (S) (T) (U) (V) (W) (X) (Y) (Z) (AA) (AB) (AC) (AD) (AE) (AF) (AG) (AH) (AI) (AJ) (AK) (AL) (AM) (AN) (AO) (AP) (AQ) (AR) (AS) (AT) (AU) (AV) (AW) (AX) (AY) (AZ) (BA) (BB) (BC) (BD) (BE) (BF) (BG) (BH) (BI) (BJ) (BK) (BL) (BM) (BN) (BO) (BP) (BQ) (BR) (BS) (BT) (BU) (BV) (BW) (BX) (BY) (BZ) (CA) (CB) (CC) (CD) (CE) (CF) (CG) (CH) (CI) (CJ) (CK) (CL) (CM) (CN) (CO) (CP) (CQ) (CR) (CS) (CT) (CU) (CV) (CW) (CX) (CY) (CZ) (DA) (DB) (DC) (DD) (DE) (DF) (DG) (DH) (DI) (DJ) (DK) (DL) (DM) (DN) (DO) (DP) (DQ) (DR) (DS) (DT) (DU) (DV) (DW) (DX) (DY) (DZ) (EA) (EB) (EC) (ED) (EE) (EF) (EG) (EH) (EI) (EJ) (EK) (EL) (EM) (EN) (EO) (EP) (EQ) (ER) (ES) (ET) (EU) (EV) (EW) (EX) (EY) (EZ) (FA) (FB) (FC) (FD) (FE) (FF) (FG) (FH) (FI) (FJ) (FK) (FL) (FM) (FN) (FO) (FP) (FQ) (FR) (FS) (FT) (FU) (FV) (FW) (FX) (FY) (FZ) (GA) (GB) (GC) (GD) (GE) (GF) (GG) (GH) (GI) (GJ) (GK) (GL) (GM) (GN) (GO) (GP) (GQ) (GR) (GS) (GT) (GU) (GV) (GW) (GX) (GY) (GZ) (HA) (HB) (HC) (HD) (HE) (HF) (HG) (HH) (HI) (HJ) (HK) (HL) (HM) (HN) (HO) (HP) (HQ) (HR) (HS) (HT) (HU) (HV) (HW) (HX) (HY) (HZ) (IA) (IB) (IC) (ID) (IE) (IF) (IG) (IH) (II) (IJ) (IK) (IL) (IM) (IN) (IO) (IP) (IQ) (IR) (IS) (IT) (IU) (IV) (IW) (IX) (IY) (IZ) (JA) (JB) (JC) (JD) (JE) (JF) (JG) (JH) (JI) (JJ) (JK) (JL) (JM) (JN) (JO) (JP) (JQ) (JR) (JS) (JT) (JU) (JV) (JW) (JX) (JY) (JZ) (KA) (KB) (KC) (KD) (KE) (KF) (KG) (KH) (KI) (KJ) (KL) (KM) (KN) (KO) (KP) (KQ) (KR) (KS) (KT) (KU) (KV) (KW) (KX) (KY) (KZ) (LA) (LB) (LC) (LD) (LE) (LF) (LG) (LH) (LI) (LJ) (LK) (LM) (LN) (LO) (LP) (LQ) (LR) (LS) (LT) (LU) (LV) (LW) (LX) (LY) (LZ) (MA) (MB) (MC) (MD) (ME) (MF) (MG) (MH) (MI) (MJ) (MK) (ML) (MM) (MN) (MO) (MP) (MQ) (MR) (MS) (MT) (MU) (MV) (MW) (MX) (MY) (MZ) (NA) (NB) (NC) (ND) (NE) (NF) (NG) (NH) (NI) (NJ) (NK) (NL) (NM) (NN) (NO) (NP) (NQ) (NR) (NS) (NT) (NU) (NV) (NW) (NX) (NY) (NZ) (OA) (OB) (OC) (OD) (OE) (OF) (OG) (OH) (OI) (OJ) (OK) (OL) (OM) (ON) (OO) (OP) (OQ) (OR) (OS) (OT) (OU) (OV) (OW) (OX) (OY) (OZ) (PA) (PB) (PC) (PD) (PE) (PF) (PG) (PH) (PI) (PJ) (PK) (PL) (PM) (PN) (PO) (PP) (PQ) (PR) (PS) (PT) (PU) (PV) (PW) (PX) (PY) (PZ) (QA) (QB) (QC) (QD) (QE) (QF) (QG) (QH) (QI) (QJ) (QK) (QL) (QM) (QN) (QO) (QP) (QQ) (QR) (QS) (QT) (QU) (QV) (QW) (QX) (QY) (QZ) (RA) (RB) (RC) (RD) (RE) (RF) (RG) (RH) (RI) (RJ) (RK) (RL) (RM) (RN) (RO) (RP) (RQ) (RR) (RS) (RT) (RU) (RV) (RW) (RX) (RY) (RZ) (SA) (SB) (SC) (SD) (SE) (SF) (SG) (SH) (SI) (SJ) (SK) (SL) (SM) (SN) (SO) (SP) (SQ) (SR) (SS) (ST) (SU) (SV) (SW) (SX) (SY) (SZ) (TA) (TB) (TC) (TD) (TE) (TF) (TG) (TH) (TI) (TJ) (TK) (TL) (TM) (TN) (TO) (TP) (TQ) (TR) (TS) (TT) (TU) (TV) (TW) (TX) (TY) (TZ) (UA) (UB) (UC) (UD) (UE) (UF) (UG) (UH) (UI) (UJ) (UK) (UL) (UM) (UN) (UO) (UP) (UQ) (UR) (US) (UT) (UU) (UV) (UW) (UX) (UY) (UZ) (VA) (VB) (VC) (VD) (VE) (VF) (VG) (VH) (VI) (VJ) (VK) (VL) (VM) (VN) (VO) (VP) (VQ) (VR) (VS) (VT) (VU) (VV) (VW) (VX) (VY) (VZ) (WA) (WB) (WC) (WD) (WE) (WF) (WG) (WH) (WI) (WJ) (WK) (WL) (WM) (WN) (WO) (WP) (WQ) (WR) (WS) (WT) (WU) (WV) (WW) (WX) (WY) (WZ) (XA) (XB) (XC) (XD) (XE) (XF) (XG) (XH) (XI) (XJ) (XK) (XL) (XM) (XN) (XO) (XP) (XQ) (XR) (XS) (XT) (XU) (XV) (XW) (XX) (XY) (XZ) (YA) (YB) (YC) (YD) (YE) (YF) (YG) (YH) (YI) (YJ) (YK) (YL) (YM) (YN) (YO) (YP) (YQ) (YR) (YS) (YT) (YU) (YV) (YW) (YX) (YY) (YZ) (ZA) (ZB) (ZC) (ZD) (ZE) (ZF) (ZG) (ZH) (ZI) (ZJ) (ZK) (ZL) (ZM) (ZN) (ZO) (ZP) (ZQ) (ZR) (ZS) (ZT) (ZU) (ZV) (ZW) (ZX) (ZY) (ZZ)

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Sedgefield

Going: good (good to firm in places)

12.50 (m 3f 110yd) 1. Top Skipper (A) S. Smith, 10-1; 2. Snow (A) (F) 11-1; 3. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 4. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 5. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 6. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 7. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 8. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 9. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 10. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 11. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 12. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 13. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 14. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 15. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 16. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 17. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 18. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 19. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 20. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 21. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 22. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 23. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 24. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 25. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 26. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 27. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 28. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 29. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 30. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 31. Bone Saver (A) (F) 11-1; 32. Arden's Star (A) (F) 11-1; 33. 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Flying Scot ready for take-off with the stars

David Powell talks to Ian Mackie about life as the new No 1 of British sprinting

It was a day which illustrated perfectly the single-mindedness of Ian Mackie. The wind blew cold, grey skies hung over the Cardiff Athletic Stadium and there was rain in the air. Mackie was sniffling with a winter chill, his watery eyes crying for a sick note to take the day off training. But Mackie trained on.

If only the workmen on the building site who scoffed at him six years ago could see him now. Friends in high places, bags packed ready for five weeks' training in Australia, photoshoots, children knocking at his door asking for his autograph.

He wishes the workmen from the Dunfermline roof tiling business, where he was employed as a 15-year-old straight out of school, would knock too. "I would really like to see them again, just to say: 'What do you think now? You laughed in my face? When I told them I was going to do athletics, they just laughed.'"

Mackie gave up the job after his first week and never worked again, determined to prove that he could be a successful athlete, often reminding himself of what life might hold if he failed. "That week really toughened me up," Mackie, now 21, said. "It made me think twice about how hard life can be."

If becoming the first British athlete for a decade to beat Linford Christie over 100 metres in August was his week in heaven, his roof-tiling job was his week in hell. "I was lifting heavy tiles, sometimes with a 45-foot drop to the ground," Mackie said. "They were get-

ting me to carry big rolls of felt and bags of cement. I was just 15 and they got me to do it because I was the apprentice."

Once, when a tractor ran into scaffolding on which Mackie was perched, he avoided a 40-foot fall only by an instinctive hand thrown out to grip a saving wall. "I thought: 'I'm just going to get injured,'" Mackie recalled.

Consumed by a passion to follow Christie to the top of world sprinting, he left. For five years, he survived on the support of his parents — his father a cleaner — and income support, and, 12 months ago, remaining a full-time athlete looked as shaky as his footing on the scaffolding.

"I had just got back into training after recovering from an inflamed muscle," he said. "I was unemployed, money was tight, and mum and dad were saying: 'You should be getting a job because you've been injured this season and nothing has happened.'"

"My mum and dad were concerned for my future. They were saying: 'You cannot sign on unemployed for the rest of your life.'"

Recovery from injury, an Olympic semi-final place, a personal best of 10.17 seconds, and, above all, downing Christie has reversed his fortunes. Mackie has been recruited by the management agency owned by Christie and Colin Jackson. He has on tap the experience and advice that they can bring. They are financing his training in Australia, for which he leaves tomorrow, and will be there with him. As he builds up to



Mackie, left, and Jackson, right, train together for the first time in Cardiff yesterday ahead of five weeks in Australia

the 1997 world championships, Mackie will also train in the company of Frankie Fredericks and Merlene Ottey.

"I have been thrown into a world of world-class athletics," Mackie said after his first training session with Jackson. "Last year, I was watching Colin, Linford and Frankie on TV and, all of a sudden, I am with them. It is hard to describe what it feels like."

Now that Christie has retired, Mackie may succeed him as European champion in

1998. In the meantime, the Scot is looking to reach the world championship final in Athens but is well aware that he cannot take being the British No 1 for granted. Darren Campbell also ran 10.17 last summer and he, too, is training under Jackson and Christie. Mackie and Campbell will be together in Australia.

"I believe those two will definitely go under 10.1 this year and, in good conditions, I am sure they can both duck a 9.9," Jackson said. "It is good

we will be working together," Mackie added. "We will bring each other on."

When Jackson spoke to Mackie about joining his agency, he was impressed. "I saw similarities in his approach as a 21-year-old as my approach at the same age," Jackson said. "It was just the importance of track in the life of somebody so young. He wanted to do well, he trained hard. I thought: This guy can make it."

Making it was Mackie's dream since the day that he was taken to watch Christie. "I had done athletics but I was not into it deep," Mackie recalled. "At the time I was also doing karate. I did not know what I wanted."

"I had this opportunity to get Linford's autograph. It made my day. That night I just decided that this was what I wanted to do. I wanted to be like Linford." So far so good, but the hardest part — Olympic champion, world champion — lies far ahead.

BADMINTON

Bradbury expecting to return

JULIE BRADBURY, the most successful England player of the past two years, may not play at the highest level again (Richard Eaton writes). Bradbury, who was runner-up in the All-England Championships and the World Grand Prix finals in mixed doubles, and won the Malaysian open women's doubles last season, is expecting a baby.

The Oxfordshire player has withdrawn from the six-match series against China, starting at Exeter today, and will not

play again until next summer, by which time she will be 30. Bradbury hopes to return to the England squad, but there are no mothers competing at the highest level on the world circuit and after a season out of the game it would be asking a great deal for her to return to her former standard.

England, who beat China for the first time in a series last year, will give a mixed doubles debut to Lorraine Cole, of Worcestershire, who will partner Julian Robertson. They

also include the two most experienced singles players, Darren Hall, the former European champion, and Joanne Muggeridge, and two promising young doubles partnerships, Ian Pearson and James Anderson, and Joanne Davies and Nicholas Beck.

China, holders of the world team title, have a young squad and should provide a stern test for an England team under the auspices of Steve Baddeley, the director of elite play.

IN BRIEF

Challenge Cup entry is doubled

THE number of amateur rugby league clubs in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup is being doubled to a record 72 in the competition's centenary year (Christopher Irvine writes).

The 36 National Conference League teams will have home advantage in the first round, on December 21 and 22, against leading sides from the regional leagues and two Southern Counties League representatives. London Colson and the Student Rugby League Old Boys. The final is at Wembley on May 3.

Leeds are to follow the newly-named Wigan Warriors in adding a nickname to their title and are asking supporters for ideas.

Wigan have abandoned, on cost grounds, plans to play two matches against Auckland Warriors in New Zealand in January. The club will next month present shareholders with options, including the sale of Central Park and a ground-sharing arrangement with Wigan Athletic Football Club.

Indoor first

Bowls: Andy Willis and Stuart Airey, of England, won Asia's first indoor tournament when they partnered KT Wong, a member of the Hong Kong Football Club, to the international indoor triples title at the Happy Valley race course in Hong Kong yesterday (David Rhys Jones writes).

Willis, 26, and Airey, 24, play regularly for England at the front end of Tony Alcock's rink, and in the Alcock mould are quick to attack when adverse positions develop.

Their flair helped them to defeat a Welsh pair, Robert Price and David Wilkins, who were joined by another local footballer, Philip Chan, 20-10, in the final.

Bath to tour

Rugby Union: Bath, the English cup and league champions, are planning a two-match tour of South Africa next summer. They hope to play Natal, the Currie Cup champions, in Durban and Western Province at Newlands, Cape Town, scene of England's World Cup semi-final defeat by New Zealand last year.

MOTOR RACING

Alesi holds departure talks with Benetton

By OLIVER HOIT

JEAN ALESI, the French Formula One driver, who survived a bid to oust him from the Benetton team in favour of Damon Hill at the end of last season, could still be forced out before the start of next season and replaced by the Italian driver, Giancarlo Fisichella.

Alesi and Flavio Briatore, the Benetton managing director, held an urgent meeting at the team's headquarters at Enstone, Oxfordshire, on Monday to discuss his future in light of the reduced revenue that the team can expect from sponsors because of its moderate performance last year.

Alesi and Gerhard Berger, his Austrian team-mate, failed to record a victory between them in 1996 after the feast of triumphs brought by Michael Schumacher in the previous two years. The drought is thought to have cost Benetton several million pounds in their performance-related deal with their main sponsors, Mild Seven, the Japanese tobacco company.

A mixture of bad luck and bad judgment cost Alesi and Berger the chance of victory

throughout the season. Alesi would have won the Monaco Grand Prix in May but for mechanical problems, and Berger was two laps from victory in Germany in July when his engine blew.

Against that, Alesi's rash style infuriated a team used to the metronomic performances of Schumacher and prompted, season-long speculation that he would be off-loaded. Another blow for Benetton came when Ferrari edged them out of second place in the constructors' championship that they had won the year before, costing them several million pounds more.

Berger is thought to have a water-tight contract, but although Alesi is keen to stay at Benetton, they might not be able to afford him. The Jordan team, who missed out to Arrows in the race for Hill and who still have a vacant seat alongside Ralf Schumacher, are waiting in the wings.

Ferrari have broken off talks with Sauber over supplying engine technology to the Swiss-based Formula One team because details were leaked to the press.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 44

OPHELIMITY

(b) The primary meaning is "the ability to please sexually". But there is also a secondary meaning, "the ability to please generally".

DIAMANTIFEROUS

(a) Yielding diamonds. From the Latin. "I don't care what you say — I still prefer Daniel. Anatole may be younger and more handsome, and unmarried, for that matter, so he says. But Daniel is diamantiferous."

ATAXY

(c) Disturbance of bodily functions, especially of movement. From the Greek for "without movement". It is pronounced exactly the same as "a taxi".

RAMPALLION

(a) A bold, romping, forward, forward or wanton woman. A woman who romps. An Elizabethan term. See Falstaff to Mistress Quickly, when she tries to have him arrested: "Away, you scullion; you fustian! I'll tickle your catastrophe." (Henry IV, Part II, Act II, Scene I) In modern use you could try: "Mother, may I have a rampallion for my birthday?"

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1 Qh8+ 2 Rxb8 3 Kf7 4 Ng7 5 ... Ke6 4 ex5+ is crushing! 4 Rg7+ Ke5 5 Rd7 Kxd7 6 h6 and wins

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Unmasking of Louisa May

Sensational Women. Radio 4 (FM) 10.00am.
The recent discovery of the manuscript for *The Chase*, a dark novel that had lain forgotten for a century, gave many of us a bit of a shock. Could this really be by the same Louisa May Alcott fondly remembered for *Little Women*, that testament to enduring family values, and its sequel? It was. *The Chase* wasn't the only novel to reveal the other side of her literary talent. *Sensational Women*, the last sort of title we would once have imagined could have anything to do with the retiring and selfless Louisa May, digs up other London-forgotten novels such as her *Behind a Mask* in which a children's governess turns out to be a con-artist — and, what's more, gets away with it. We hear excerpts from it this morning.

Hearing with Hegley. Radio 4, 11.15pm.
Last week, tuning in for the first time to John Hegley, described in *Radio Times* as the poet laureate of alternative comedy, I kept on deciding to turn him off, then changing my mind. I confess that most alternative comedy makes me wince, either because it is puerile or because it sickens me when, according to the rules of comedy, I should be laughing my head off, like his audience. Nothing daunted, I tuned in to tonight's edition. I do not care for his poem about condoms, but much admire his miniature verse called *Amens*. I congratulate him for his ingenuity in finding a rhyme for furniture. Hegley is growing on me.

RADIO 1	WORLD SERVICE
6.30am Chris Evans 9.00 Simon Mayo. Includes the Golden Hour 12.00 Lisa Foxton. Includes at 12.30pm-12.45 Newsday and at 1.45 The Net 2.00 Nicky Campbell 4.00 Mark Goodier. Includes at 5.30-5.45 Newsbeat 7.00 Evening Session, with Jo Whiteley and Steve Lamacz 10.00 Stuart Maconie. Live from Manchester 12.00 Claire Sells 4.00pm Clive Warren, with the Early Breakfast Show	All times in GMT. News on the hour. 5.30am Europe Today 6.30 Europe Today 7.15 On the Street 7.30 Eurovision 8.15 Words of Faith 8.15 Concert Hall 9.05 World Business Report 9.15 Andy Kershaw 9.45 Sports Roundup 10.30 BBC English 10.45 On the Street 11.30 Pick of the World 12.05pm World Business Report 12.15 Britain Today 12.30 Composer of the Month 2.05 Roundup 3.15 Concert Hall 4.15 World Today 4.30 BBC English 4.45 Britain Today 5.30 World Business Report 6.15 Sports Roundup 6.30 Discovery 7.01 Outlook 7.25 Words of Faith 7.30 Musictrack 9.05 World Business Report 9.15 Britain Today 9.30 Newsday 10.30 World Today 10.45 Sports Roundup 11.10 Science World 11.15 Country Style 11.30 Musictrack 12.05pm From Our Own Correspondent 12.45 Britain Today 1.30 Outlook 1.55 Words of Faith 2.30 Assignment 3.15 Sports Roundup 3.30 Meridian Books 4.30 Europe Today
RADIO 2	CLASSIC FM
6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 8.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Jimmy Young 1.30pm Judi Spen 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 Helen Shanahan 7.00 Jan Lloyd 8.00 Colin Cuthbert 8.30 Burdett's True Get (2/3) 9.00 Tommy Makem's Irish Music (1/5) 9.30 Nigel Ogden 10.30 The Jamisons 12.05pm Steve Macdonald 3.00 Alex Leslie	4.00pm Mike Griffin 6.00 Mike Pook 8.00 Henry Kelly 12.00 Susanah Samons 2.00pm Concerto (Irra) (Irra) 3.00 Jamie Cullum 6.00 Newsday 7.00 The 1975 7.30 Forum (1/5) 8.00 Evening Concert (Gardner) (Gardner) 8.30 Concerto (Irra) (Irra) 9.00 Op 25 1. C. Schumann-Tedeschi (Schumann) 1.10 D. O. 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No delight in the victorious kitchen garden

Delight is a word much overused by television critics, but it would be silly to pretend that it doesn't have its uses. It is one up from "charming", perfect for describing those artfully made but easily watched programmes that send us to bed with a smile, and the nearest we get to the one-word accolades of the theatre poster. So there I was, all ready to write of *Going to Chelsea* (ITV) - "a delight" (*The Times*). Then I watched it.

Disappointment, it must be said, took some time to set in. Indeed for the first 20 minutes, last night's fly-on-the-trellis look at the Chelsea Flower Show appeared a copper-bottomed delight. Amusing characters, jolly music and a positive surfeit of stylish photography - dogs trotting after cars, elderly gentlemen cycling in the middle distance, you know the kind of thing. A delight, no doubt about it. But then, rather like the delphic

turns so crucial to Stephen Woodhams's blue-and-orange kitchen garden, it wilted. Somehow, I still can't work out who it was - lost interest. It may have been Michael Davies, the director, who, as the opening day grew closer, curiously seemed to have less and less to show us. Or it may have been Woodhams, whose enthusiasm appeared to fade the nearer his beautifully drawn planning plans came to reality. Alternatively, I suppose it could have been me. Never been a great one for gardening.

I am, however, a great one for documentaries and this one, despite the wonderfully promising subject, goes down as a near miss. Loose ends, for instance, were worryingly untied with all sorts of horticultural crises unresolved by the final credits. Did the Italian wisteria go back? Did the willow stems grow around the window frame? And most importantly of

all, did Mrs Woodhams allow her son to dig up her prized rhubarb? Since one of the reasons the garden was awarded a silver medal rather than a gold was "not enough vegetables", I presume the answer to that final question was no.

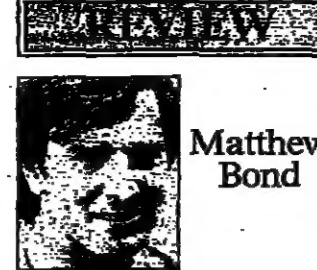
Come the big day, nothing quite worked as Davies would surely have liked it. Woodhams overslept, the weather was horrible and the garden, I regret to say, looked a tad unremarkable, especially given the £50,000 outlay. An apparent lack of blue suggested that money can't buy you love - or unwitting delinquents. A weary Woodhams never did tell us what he thought of the finished product but resolved never to work with vegetables again. Or camera crews, I imagine.

Delight is too strong a word to describe *University Challenge* (BBC2) but it is certainly fun, with

least ensure that the tie-breaker was an arts question. "The girl with enamel eyes is the subtitle of which ballet by Delibes?" I hadn't a clue but Mr Amos, the star of the St Catharine's team, did. "Was it *Coppelia*?" It was.

Which brings me to an important point. How many *University Challenge* questions should be able to answer? Starters for ten to which the answer is "Captain Pugwash" certainly lure you into a false sense of security - but just when you're thinking "easy-peasy, lemon-squeezy", along comes a beautifully constructed bonus involving olives, the Olive Tree Alliance and the Momi of Olives. I haven't counted but I reckon that anything closer to 50 per cent is probably pretty good going.

It must be some sort of defining moment when you realise you have become the answer to a quiz question. So something of a red



Matthew Bond

Jeremy Paxman now firmly and enjoyably established in the chairman's seat. Last night's opening game between Imperial College, the reigning champions, and Paxman's old college, St Catharine's, Cambridge, was a thriller, with Imperial coming back from dead-and-buried to level at the going. At the start, Paxman had promised Catz (his abbreviation, not mine) no favours but he did at

- BBC1**
- 6.00am BUSINESS BREAKFAST (72416)
 - 7.00 BBC BREAKFAST NEWS (Cesfax) (38874)
 - 9.00 BREAKFAST NEWS EXTRA (Cesfax) (374787)
 - 9.20 STYLISH CHALLENGE (s) (1474364)
 - 9.45 KILROY (s) (863368)
 - 10.30 CAN'T COOK, WON'T COOK (s) (12619)
 - 11.00 NEWS, REGIONAL NEWS (Cesfax) and weather (271941)
 - 11.05 THE REALLY USEFUL SHOW (s) (4337400)
 - 11.45 SMALLER PEOPLE (s) (8154752)
 - 12.00 NEWS, REGIONAL NEWS (Cesfax) and weather (4070481)
 - 12.05pm POLICE RESCUE (s) (2797228)
 - 12.58 THE WEATHER SHOW (51117874)
 - 1.00 NEWS (Cesfax) and weather (39361)
 - 1.30 REGIONAL NEWS (14339110)
 - 1.40 NEIGHBOURS (Cesfax) (s) (24240110)
 - 2.00 CALL MY BLUFF (s) (3936) 2.30 A WEEK IN THE COUNTRY (s) (110) 3.00 INCOGNITO (5771)
 - 3.30 ANTS IN YOUR PANTS (8324955) 3.50 CHUCKLEVISION (8471758) 4.10 GET YOUR OWN BACK (5817058) 4.30 THE QUEEN'S NOSE (1895955) 5.00 NEWSROUND (343355) 5.10 BLUE PETER (Cesfax) (2553265)
 - 5.25 NEIGHBOURS (s) (Cesfax) (s) (829139)
 - 6.00 NEWS (Cesfax) and weather (138)
 - 6.30 REGIONAL NEWS MAGAZINES (619)
 - 7.00 SMALL TALK Presented by Ronnie Corbett (Cesfax) (s) (7752)
 - 7.30 HERE AND NOW Sue Lawley and the team present news stories and items of interest (Cesfax) (s) (503)
 - 8.00 HOW DO THEY DO THAT? Revealing how police use special techniques and how one man can tame a wild and terrified horse in a matter of minutes (Cesfax) (s) (152684)
 - 8.50 POINTS OF VIEW Presented by Anne Robinson (Cesfax) (s) (23393)
 - 9.00 NEWS (Cesfax) REGIONAL NEWS and weather (9145)
 - 9.30 THE X-FILES: Syzygy Mulder and Scully investigate rumours of a satanic cult operating in an area where several teenagers have died. With David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson (Cesfax) (s) (732438)
 - 10.15 HARRY ENFIELD AND CHUMS (s) (Cesfax) (s) (143232) WALES: Kane's Wales 11.15 FILM: National Lampoon's European Vacation 12.45am FILM: Necessary Roughness 2.30 News headlines and weather.
 - 10.45 FILM: National Lampoon's European Vacation (1985) with Chevy Chase. The accident-prone Gershwyl family with a European holiday on an American television quiz show. Directed by Amy Heckerling (513077)
 - 12.15am FILM: Necessary Roughness (1992) with Scott Bakula. After sacking their old football team, Texas State University hire a coach to assemble a new one. Directed by Stan Dragoti (252240)
 - 2.00 WEATHER (718462)
- VideoPlus+** and the Video PlusCode
- The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes, which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a Video Plus+ remote. To use the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record, VideoPlus+ (+), Playback (+) and Video Programme are trademarks of General Development Ltd.

- BBC2**
- 6.00am O U L POWERS OF THE... PRESIDENT (5717684) 6.50 WORLD OF THE DRAGON (2333336) 7.15 SEE NEAR BREAKFAST NEWS 7.30 PERILS OF PENELOPE PITSTOP (4108503) 7.55 IT'S NEVER WORKING (Cesfax) (751587) 8.25 CHRISTOPHER WHEELER (Cesfax) (820013) 8.55 MONTY (s) (5868225) 9.25 RECORD (s) (847416) 9.50 DAYTIME ON TWO: LE CAFE DES REVES (1485400) 9.25 SEE YOU, SEE ME (8251835) 9.45 WORDS AND PICTURES (538972) 10.00 PLAYDAYS (24597) 10.30 NUMBER-TIME (387705) 10.45 CATS' EYES (5328752) 11.00 AROUND SCOTLAND (5328752) 11.20 MUSIC MAKERS (7161416) 11.40 ENGLISH EXPRESS (8240503) 12.00 GERMAN GLOBE (4078023) 12.05 SEEING THROUGH SCIENCE (4852958) 12.30pm WORKING LUNCH (53884) 1.00 THE GEOGRAPHY PROGRAMME (4194431) 1.20 THUNDERBIRDS IN HINDI (4802185) 1.25 JIG ZAG (9724028) 1.45 COME OUTSIDE (1428787) 2.00 CHRISTOPHER CROCODILE (s) (4659400) 2.05 MONTY (s) (4658771) 2.10 THE CHAMPIONS (s) (Cesfax) (584874) 2.30 NEWS 3.05 WESTMINSTER (Cesfax) (581394) 3.55 NEWS: 4.00 TODAY'S DAY (s) (232) 4.30 READY, STEADY, COOK (s) (418) 5.00 OPRAH WINFREY SHOW (Cesfax) (s) (203400) 5.40 MARY BERRY AT HOME (s) (615110) 5.55 TURNING POINTS (543855)
 - 6.00 STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION (s) (Cesfax) (s) (357416)
 - 6.45 TREY AND SHONN'S TRANSMISSION IMPOSSIBLE (s) (503951)
 - 7.00 TESTAMENT: THE BIBLE IN ANIMATION (Cesfax) (s) (5394)
 - 7.30 FROM THE EDGE (Cesfax) (s) (145)
 - 8.00 TRUST ME, I'M A DOCTOR (Cesfax) (s) (4042)
 - 8.30 TWO FAT LADIES Last in the series. (Cesfax) (s) (5077)
 - 9.00 MODERN TIMES: Dog Trouble (Cesfax) (s) (424874)
 - 9.50 NAKED CITY: The Day of Reckoning (Cesfax) (s) (139400)
 - 10.30 NEWSNIGHT (808058)
 - 11.15 SONO STORIES (571951)
 - 12.00 MIDNIGHT HOUR (s) (25288)
 - 12.30am THE LEARNING ZONE: O U OPEN ADVICE (94820) 1.00 IMAGINING NEW WORLDS (16199) 1.30 WHO BELONGS TO GLASGOW? (42548) 2.00 TOPICS FOR TUTORIAL (52207) 4.00 ENGLISH HERITAGE (38345) 4.30 MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS (17462) 5.00 HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK (80068) 5.30 ADVISER (26917)

- Sky Sports 1**
- 7.00am Sports Centre (23394) 7.30 World Wrestling Federation: Bash at the Beach (97507) 8.30 Racing News (40597) 8.50 Sports Centre (27077) 9.00 Sports Centre (27077) 9.30 Sports Centre (27077) 10.00 Sports Centre (27077) 10.30 Sports Centre (27077) 11.00 Sports Centre (27077) 11.30 Sports Centre (27077) 12.00 Sports Centre (27077) 12.30 Sports Centre (27077) 1.00 Sports Centre (27077) 1.30 Sports Centre (27077) 2.00 Sports Centre (27077) 2.30 Sports Centre (27077) 3.00 Sports Centre (27077) 3.30 Sports Centre (27077) 4.00 Sports Centre (27077) 4.30 Sports Centre (27077) 5.00 Sports Centre (27077) 5.30 Sports Centre (27077) 6.00 Sports Centre (27077) 6.30 Sports Centre (27077) 7.00 Sports Centre (27077) 7.30 Sports Centre (27077) 8.00 Sports Centre (27077) 8.30 Sports Centre (27077) 9.00 Sports Centre (27077) 9.30 Sports Centre (27077) 10.00 Sports Centre (27077) 10.30 Sports Centre (27077) 11.00 Sports Centre (27077) 11.30 Sports Centre (27077) 12.00 Sports Centre (27077) 12.30 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CRICKET 42

Leading lights who were ahead of rest of the field

SPORT

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 13 1996

FOOTBALL 44

Wilson takes first steps down long road to recovery



Henman outlines plan to double his efforts after routine first-round triumph

Bates puts case for national unity

By ALIX RAMSAY

THERE were signs of British tennis past, present and future yesterday in Telford at the Guardian Direct British national championships. The past came in the shape of Jeremy Bates, the present was represented — as it has been all year — by Tim Henman, while the future promises the two of them working in tandem.

Bates took a few tentative steps out of retirement to dispose of David Draper 6-4, 6-4 and make his way into the second round, his first competitive match since Wimbledon. Apart, that is, from an over-35s event in Germany three weeks ago, when he beat Anders Jarryd in the final. Quite what he was doing there is unclear — Bates is still only 34 — but, having won six titles here, Bates could not resist the call of one last week in Telford. He has few ambitions for

Telford results 43

his own tennis this week and once Draper was sent packing he seemed rather more excited about his new role with the Lawn Tennis Association, taking charge of men's national training. In the days when Bates was making his way up the ranks, there was little in the way of a recognisable system to help him. Now he is in charge, Bates wants to make a difference.

"I want to see the development of good juniors into good seniors," Bates said. "I want to start a number of things. We will try to set up some training camps with juniors and seniors both involved, hopefully in Florida a couple of times a year. We will get Tim and Greg [Rusedski] involved, as well as the leading juniors and the leading coaches."

The idea is to get around 20 players at under-15 and under-16 level together to learn from the professionals. "It's good for the juniors to be involved with the seniors," Bates said, a point reinforced by Henman. "I practised with Jeremy a lot when I was young," he said, "and I learnt that there is no magic secret. Hopefully the



Henman, the British No 1, had little difficulty accounting for Saffery in the first round of the national championships yesterday. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

younger players will see Greg and myself practise and learn the same. They will see that we work hard but we also have a lot of fun with what we're doing."

Henman has a few plans of his own for the future. The past few weeks have hardly

been productive, with three first-round losses in three weeks. But while a 6-4, 6-2 first-round win over Gregg Saffery, a 24-year-old qualifier who struggles to make a living on the satellite circuit, does not constitute a significant achievement, a win is a still a win. "Yeah, I was fairly anxious not to make it four in a row," he said with a hint of a grin.

After a spectacular year that has taken him to a handful of semi-finals but no further,

Henman is now planning the next step for the new year. Part of the plan is to play more doubles in order to improve his physical and mental stamina. At the moment he is comparing diaries with Jan Siemerink, of Holland, to see whether they can set up a regular partnership.

"Maybe I need to become fitter and stronger," he said. "I've not progressed beyond the semi-finals, when I am supposed to be fitter and stronger,

and playing more doubles is an area that I think will help to improve my physical condition and strength." Not that he needed a great deal of either against Saffery, unlike his opposite number in the British women's rankings.

Sam Smith, the No 1 seed, struggled for nearly two hours against Abigail Toroff before edging through 2-6, 7-5, 6-3. There must have been something in the air at the Telford International Centre as just a couple of hours later Rachel

Viola, the No 2 seed, went out to Lorna Woodroffe. Viola, can just about lay claim to being British. She was born in Manchester but has spent most of her 24 years in Miami and, faced with the prospect of a cold, wet November in Telford, she went out 6-4, 6-4.

The former British No 1, Clare Wood, was not enjoying her spell in Telford either. She made heavy weather of her victory over Shirli-Ann Siddall, struggling through a marathon match to win 6-7,

6-4, 6-2. She sped to convincing leads in the first two sets before allowing Siddall back into the fight. But she finally learnt her lesson and headed for the second round.

The two national junior champions, Arvind Parmar, from Hertfordshire, and Louise Lister, from Warwickshire, both made the most of their wild cards yesterday. Parmar beat Mike Boulding, from Yorkshire, 6-4, 6-3, while Lister defeated Vicky Davies, from Wales, 4-6, 6-4, 6-0.

Union puts forward plan for peace with clubs

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THE Rugby Football Union (RFU) has tonight delivered its offer to the leading English clubs — £8 million this season and £10 million the following two seasons — as the price of peace in the year-long battle with English Professional Rugby Union Clubs (Epruc).

A letter to the clubs, explaining details of a revised agreement proposed by the RFU, says: "As we hope you will see, the agreement as drafted is generous, fair and reasonable, and represents a proper balance between the desire of the Epruc clubs for autonomy and the RFU's duty as a governing body to be a proper guardian of the game."

The offer, which the clubs have been asked to approve in principle by tomorrow, apparently has the backing of at least one second division club, Nottingham. It further allows for two Epruc members to be co-opted onto the RFU executive.

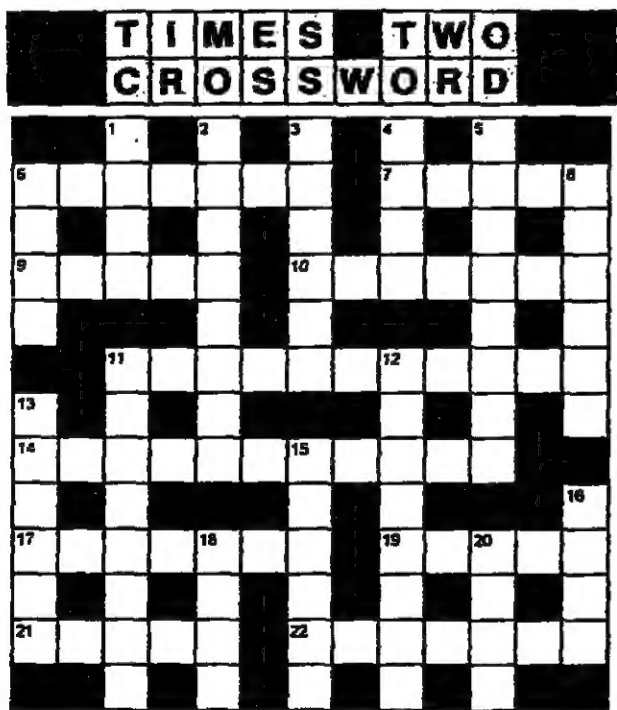
It remains to be seen whether Epruc, which has circulated its own draft agreement to clubs, and which the RFU finds unacceptable, will support the offer at a meeting in Northampton today. Epruc has already held out an olive branch in promising to release players from the first and second divisions for divisional matches next month.

The fixture chaos, which has angered clubs and is almost certain to see further postponements because of clashes of league and international dates, is also being looked at. Roger Pickering, the chief executive of the five nations' committees, offered hope of a properly-structured campaign for international teams, clubs and provinces throughout Britain and France from next September.

"We are looking at a pan-European structure, whereby club matches and international matches would be played on the same dates in each country," he said.

Clubs have recalled Massimo Cuttitta, their captain, after injury and Corrado Covi, the flanker, after a five-year absence, for the squad to face England at Twickenham on November 23.

SQUAD: M Cuttitta (captain), A Carew, M Castelletto, I Francescato, L Moroni, D Sestini, A Sestini, A Trossello, O Trossello, D Trossello, G Trossello, F Trossello, P Trossello, A Trossello, C Trossello, G Trossello, J Trossello, M Trossello.



No 938

ACROSS

- 6 Travesty; parlour-game act (7)
7 Forgetfulness plant; water-lily (5)
9 Holy book (5)
10 Jap. floral art (7)
11 Gesture of reconciliation (5,6)
14 (Remark) with nice and nasty meanings (6-5)
17 Got own back (for) (7)
19 Maurice —, Fr. composer (5)
21 Lure; diversion (5)
22 — Kipling (7)

DOWN

- 1 Point designed to catch (4)
2 Army equipment (8)
3 Edit; check what learnt (6)
4 Adhesive (4)
5 Tense; filtered (8)
6 Island, capital Havana (4)
8 Wrap well; cut-grass strip (6)
11 Wealth (8)
12 Fashion industry (3,5)
13 Eight kings (not inc. Confessor) (6)
15 Last; tolerate (6)
16 Went smoothly, gradually (4)
18 Spanish portraitist (4)
20 Call meat (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 937

- ACROSS: 1 Sham 4 Potlatch 8 Fair game 9 Bunk 10 Cynic 11 Scenery 13 Tattoo 15 Simple 18 Macabre 20 Adieu 23 Dish 24 Wildlife 25 Measured 26 Rank
DOWN: 2 Heady 3 Marxist 4 Plan 5 To excess 6 Alban 7 Control 10 Cut 12 Borrower 14 Avarice 16 Modular 17 Emu 19 Athens 21 Elfin 22 Plod

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 933

In association with BRITISH MIDLAND

- ACROSS: 1 Pollster 5 Mess 9 Onion 10 Glutinous 11 Gallon 12 Sate 13 Women's Lib 18 Anger 20 Shuffle 22 Miranda 23 Stars 24 Neep 25 Peat moss
DOWN: 1 Plough 2 Laid low 3 Singe 4 Egg on one's face 6 Erupt 7 Sherry 8 Morsel 14 Marine 15 Buffalo 16 Cayman 17 Census 19 George 21 Upset

1st PRIZE of a return ticket travelling economy class to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND'S domestic or international network is R Clegg, Selly Oak, Birmingham.

2nd PRIZE of a return ticket to anywhere on BRITISH MIDLAND'S domestic network is E I Jones, Penistone, Sheffield.
All flights subject to availability.

Ireland lose Aldridge to Rovers

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

JOHN ALDRIDGE yesterday announced that he is retiring from international football so that he can concentrate on being player-manager of Tranmere Rovers, of the Nationwide League first division.

Aldridge made his decision known to Mick McCarthy, the Ireland manager, after being confined to the substitutes' bench throughout the goalless World Cup group eight qualifying match with Iceland in Dublin on Sunday.

The striker, 38, was hoping to score the goal that would have equalled Frank Stapleton's Ireland record of 20 goals, but he said: "I have decided to retire from international football because of my complete commitment as player-manager of Tranmere Rovers Football Club."

"I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who has given me their support and encouragement during my ten great years in international football, with precious memories that will stay with me for ever."

"It has been a gut-wrenching decision for me to make, but my commitments now with Tranmere mean that I can no longer afford to be away with the international squad if I am not actually going to play."

McCarthy said: "I'm disappointed but I can understand it." He denied rumours that he had had a difference of opinion with Aldridge. "He's been a great servant to Irish football," McCarthy said.

Andorrans set ball rolling on international career

ASSUMING the opposition turn up — and as they are Estonia, recent refusniks against Scotland, there can be no guarantee of that — Andorra will become the newest football nation when it hosts its first international match in Andorra La Vella, the capital, today. For a country that has been in existence for more than 700 years and is noted primarily for its views of the Pyrenees, cheap skiing and duty-free shopping, this could be an epoch-making event.

The fixture has generated intense local interest and the Andorra Football Federation (AFF) expects the stadium —

Football is scaling new heights in the shadow of the Pyrenees. Simon Wilde reports

described yesterday as "fairly well-equipped" by a Fifa official — to be full. This means a bumper crowd of 1,000; small, perhaps, by British standards, but as that figure constitutes 5 per cent of the native Andorran population (which is outnumbered three-to-one by foreign residents and tourists), England would, proportionally, have to attract a home crowd of three million to match it.

Needless to say, the Andorra team will be largely made up of amateurs — bank clerks, civil servants, accountants and, predictably in a country so dependent on tourism, construction workers, a hotel manager and a lift repairman — and is approaching its first match in suitably Cornishian spirit.

The result is the least important thing," David Carpa, general secretary of the AFF, said. "The players accept that they are not well trained as their opponents. There is a lot of euphoria, a lot of expectation."

Andorra, a country of just 175 square miles sandwiched between France and Spain, has no professional league, only 300 registered players and joined Fifa, football's world governing body, five months ago, along with such luminaries as Guam, British Virgin Islands and Palestine (whose membership is, however, still provisional).

They have also joined Uefa, the European governing body, and hope to play in the next European championship, where they could find themselves in the same qualifying group as England, Might, England, therefore, take the precaution of playing an exploratory match in Andorra, sampling skiing and duty free on the way, in the near future.

Emerson to remain with Middlesbrough

EMERSON, the Brazil international midfielder player, will return to training today with Middlesbrough after a break during which it was suggested that he wanted to leave the FA Carling Premiership club (David Maddock writes). The indications are, however, that the player will be persuaded to stay on Teesside, at least in the short term.

If the Brazilian goes, then there are strong indications that Juninho, his fellow countryman, will follow him out of the Riverside Stadium.

Gianni Palladini, Emerson's agent, who also represents Juninho and Ravanelli, the Italian forward, said that Emerson had been persuaded to give Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, more time to produce a winning team. "There was not a problem at the beginning of the season, because the team

was winning," Palladini said. "But lately they have not been winning, and Robson understands the situation. He is going to bring in a few more top-class players and I'm sure that should make them happier. I've convinced Emerson to come back and, hopefully, he will now settle down."

Yesterday, though, the indications were that it was Leeds United and not Middlesbrough who were on the verge of signing an international player. George Graham, the Leeds manager, revealed a strong interest in Ramon Vega, the Switzerland international centre back, who is with the Italian club, Cagliari.

Graham was also busy negotiating a deal which will allow Tomas Broth to leave for Sampdoria on extended loan, with a view to a possible £2 million transfer at the end of the season.

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